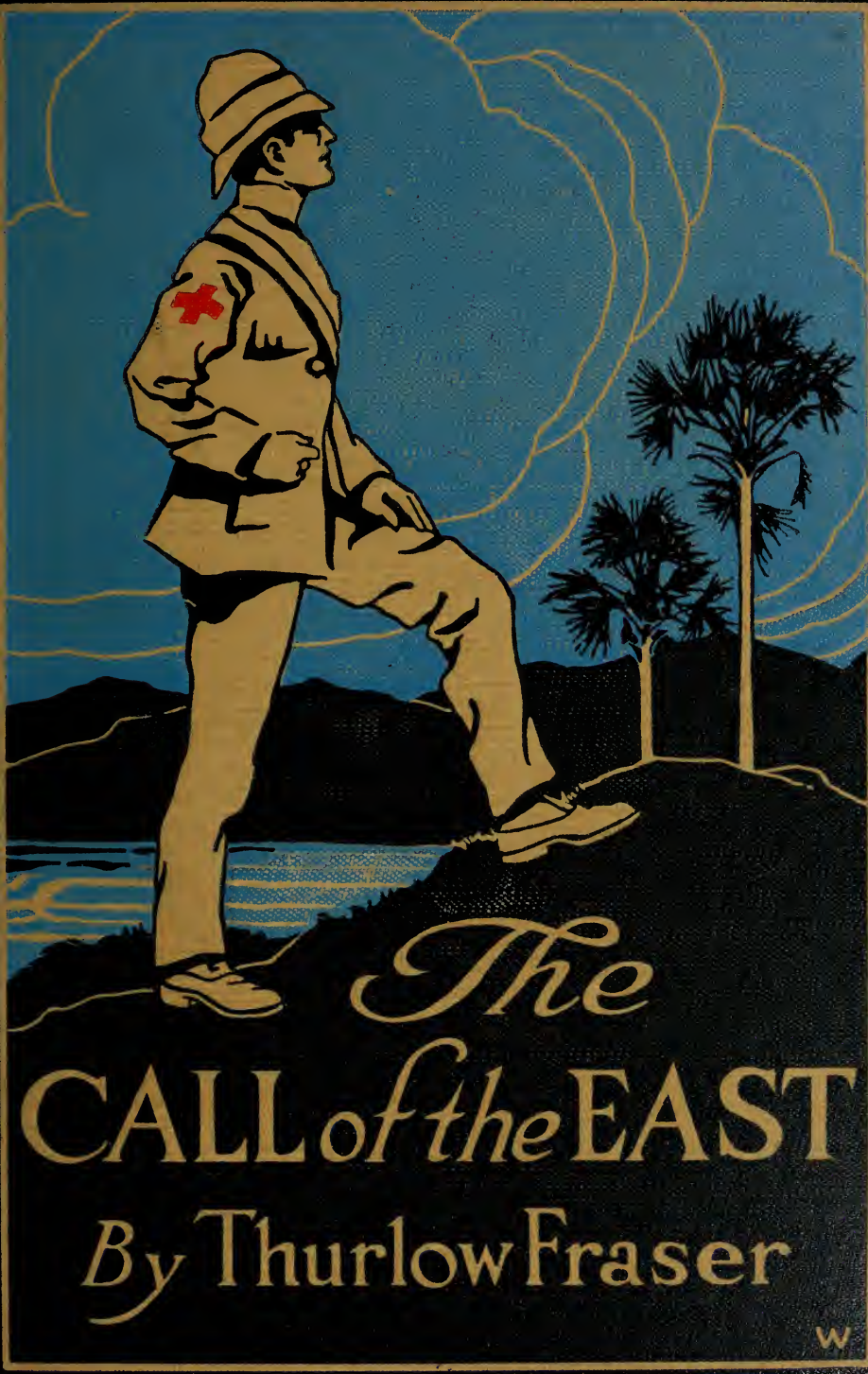
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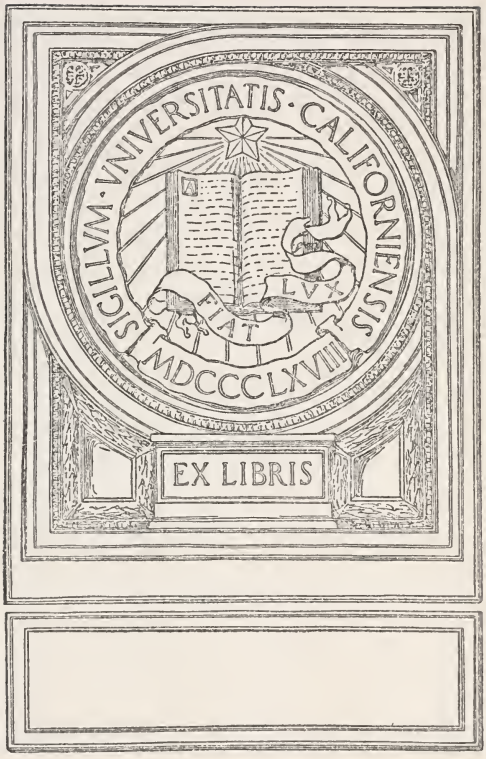
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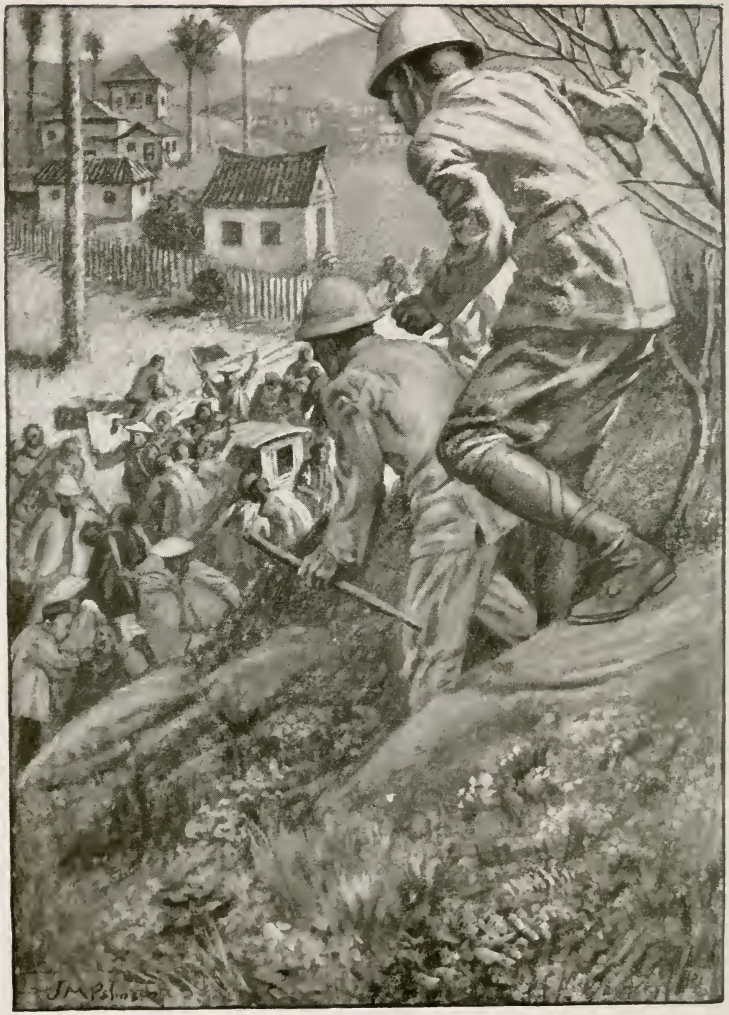

They came over the last bluff

(See page 186.)

THE CALL OF THE EAST

A ROMANCE OF FAR FORMOSA

BY

THURLOW FRASER

Illustrated

NEW YORK CHICAGO TORONTO

Fleming H. Revell Company

LONDON AND EDINBURGH

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FLEMING H. REVELL COMPANY

New York: 158 Fifth Avenue
Chicago: 125 N. Wabash Ave.
Toronto: 25 Richmond St., W.
London: 21 Paternoster Square
Edinburgh: 100 Princes Street

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To
Her who shared my life and
suffered in the Beautiful Isle

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FOREWORD

IN every port of the Orient the outposts of the restless, aggressive West touch the lines of the impassive East. Consuls, military and naval officers, merchants, missionaries force the ideas and ideals of the West upon the reluctant East. Many of these representatives of western civilization are true to the high standards of the nations and religions from which they come. Many others fall to the level, and below the level, of those they live among.

This story is an attempt to picture this life where the East meets the West, in one small port and for the one short period covered by the Franco-Chinese War of 1884-85. Of the characters one, Dr. MacKay, is unhesitatingly called by his own name. Sergeant Gorman and one or two others of the subordinate figures are drawn from life. The rest, including the principal actors, are purely imaginary.

T. F.

OWEN SOUND, ONT.

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I

STORM SIGNALS

"PARDON me, Miss MacAllister! Is there any way in which I can be of service to you?"

The young lady addressed turned quickly from the deck-rail on which she had been leaning, and with a defiant toss of her head faced her questioner. A hot flush of resentment chased from her face the undeniable pallor of a moment before.

"In what way do you think you can be of service to me, Mr. Sinclair?" she demanded sharply.

"I thought that you were ill, and——"

"And is it so uncommon to be sea-sick, or is it such a dangerous ailment, that at the first symptom the patient must be cared for as if she had the plague?"

"Perhaps not! But I am told that it is uncomfortable."

There was a humorous twinkle in his eyes. At the sight of it hers flashed, and the flame of her anger rose higher.

"From that I am to understand, Mr. Sinclair, that you are one of those superior beings who never suffer from sea-sickness."

"I must confess to belonging to that class," he replied good-humouredly. "I have never experienced its qualms."

"Then I abominate such people. They call themselves 'good sailors.' They offer sympathy to others, and all the while are laughing in their sleeves. They

are insufferable prigs. I want none of their sympathy."

"But, Miss MacAllister, you misunderstand me. I am not offering you empty sympathy. I am a medical doctor, and for the present am in charge of the health of the passengers on this ship."

"Then, Dr. Sinclair, I am not in need of your care. I never yet saw a doctor who could do anything for sea-sickness. Their treatment is all make-believe. They know no more about it than any one else. I do not propose to be the subject of experiments. Good-evening."

She was again leaning on the rail, in an attitude which belied her defiant words.

"Good-evening," replied the young doctor, as he turned away with a scarcely perceptible shrug of his shoulders, and with an expression of mingled amusement and annoyance on his face. A low chuckle of laughter caught his ear. He was passing the cabin of the chief officer, and the door stood open.

"What is the matter with you, Mr. McLeod?" he asked, the shade of annoyance passing from his face, and a good-humoured laugh taking its place.

"Come in and close the door."

"You heard what she said?"

"Yes. How do you feel after that, doctor?"

"Withered; ready to blow away like a dry leaf in autumn!"

"You look it," laughed the mate, as he glanced admiringly at the big, handsome man who seemed to take up all the available space in the little cabin, and who was laughing as heartily as if some one else had suffered instead of himself.

"Isn't she a haughty one?" continued the chief.

"Who is she, anyway? The captain made us acquainted. But you know he doesn't go into particulars. She was Miss MacAllister. I was Sinclair. That was our first encounter. You witnessed the second."

"Her father is senior member of the big London firm of 'MacAllister, Munro Co., China Merchants.' They have hongs at every open port on the China Coast. He is making an inspection of all their agencies and has brought his wife and daughter along for company. Being a Scot, he likes to keep on good terms with the Lord, who is the giver of all good gifts. So he is mixing religion with business. In the intervals between examining accounts and sizing up the stock in their godowns, he is visiting missions, seeing that the missionaries are up to their pidgin, and preaching to the natives through interpreters."

"Easy seeing, McLeod, that you're a Scot yourself, or the son of a Scot, from your faculty of acquiring things. Where did you get all this about the MacAllisters? They joined us only this afternoon at Amoy."

"Oh, yes! But they were with us from Hong-Kong to Swatow last trip. You missed that, doctor, by going over to Canton. Miss MacAllister and I got quite chummy. Bright moonlight; dead calm; too hot to turn in and sleep! So we just sat out or strolled up and down nearly all night. If you had been there, I should have had no show. See what you missed."

"If what I got to-day be a fair sample of what I missed last trip, you're welcome to it."

The mate laid back his head and laughed with boyish glee at the rueful look which came over his friend's

countenance, at the mere memory of the stinging rebuff he had suffered.

"Do not imagine that your lady friend is always in the humour she showed to-day, doctor. She is pretty sick, and for the first time, too. She told me before what a good sailor she was. Never missed a meal at sea! Never had an inclination to turn over!"

"Did she say that, McLeod? That she was a 'good sailor'?"

"Yes."

"The vixen! And then you heard the way she has just soaked it to me for being a 'good sailor.'"

McLeod shook with laughter.

"Don't be too hard on her, doctor. She has got it good and plenty this time, and she's disgusted with herself, disgusted with the sea, the boat, and everything and everybody connected with them."

"She doesn't hesitate to express her disgust," replied the doctor. "I blundered upon her at an unlucky moment and received the full contents of the vials of her wrath."

"Never mind; she will soon get over this. Then she will be quite angelic."

"I guess she got some Chinese chow at Amoy, which didn't agree with her."

"Perhaps! But it doesn't need any chow to turn over even good sailors on a sea like this. The Channel can be dirty when it likes. This is one of the times it has chosen to be dirtier than usual."

The two young men had stepped out of the mate's cabin and were leaning on the rail looking at the turbulent sea through which they were steaming. The coast-line had already faded out of sight in the gathering gloom, but away to the northwest a great white

light winked at slow intervals of a minute. The tide was setting strongly in a southerly direction, and the ship was breasting almost directly against it. The southwest monsoon meeting the tidal current, and perhaps several other wayward and variable ocean streams which whisk and swirl through that vexed channel, was kicking up a perfect chaos of broken waves. Through this choppy turmoil the *Hailoong* ploughed her way, all the while pitching and rolling in an exasperating fashion, no two successive motions of the ship being alike. None but seasoned sailors could escape the qualms of sickness in such a sea.

"It certainly is nasty enough," said the doctor; "and the appearance of the weather does not promise much improvement."

"The storm signals were hoisted as we weighed anchor," replied McLeod. "They indicated a typhoon near the Philippines, but travelling this way. The captain thought that we could make the run across before it caught us. But if we don't see some weather before we cross Tamsui bar, I'm no prophet."

"Seven bells! Guess I had better polish up a bit for dinner."

"Don't throw away too much labour on yourself, Sinclair. She'll not appear at table this evening."

"*She* must have made considerable impression on you, Mac, from the frequency with which your mind recurs to her," retorted Sinclair, as the two separated to make hasty preparations for dinner.

II

A LULL

THERE were not many at dinner that evening. The *Hailoong* never had a very heavy passenger list. Her cabin accommodation was limited. On this trip half of the small number of passengers were in no humour for dinner.

When Dr. Sinclair entered the saloon, the chief officer, McLeod, was already at the table. His watch was nearly due, and he did not stand upon ceremony. Presently Captain Whiteley came in, and with him a tall, broad-shouldered man of past middle age. Sinclair had barely time to note the high, broad forehead, and the square jaw, clean shaven except for a fringe of side-whiskers, trimmed in old-fashioned style, and meeting under the chin, before the captain introduced him.

"Mr. MacAllister, this is Dr. Sinclair, a Canadian medical man, spying out the Far East, and incidentally acting as our ship's doctor."

"I am pleased to make your acquaintance, Dr. Sinclair. I have been in your country, and have a great respect for the energy and progressiveness of your countrymen."

"I am glad to know that you have visited Canada, Mr. MacAllister. It seems to me that most British business men and British public men are lamentably ignorant of Britain's dominions beyond the seas. It's

refreshing to meet one who has visited these new lands and knows something of their possibilities."

"It must be acknowledged that too many of us in the British Isles are insular and conservative in our ideas. But I have always felt that even in the matter of trade we cannot make a success, unless we know the people and the wants of the people with whom we do business. Our firm's largest foreign trade is with China, and this is my fourth visit to the China Coast. But we have interests in Canada also, and in connection with them I have spent some months in the Dominion."

"I am quite sure that your interests there will grow. It is a great country. There is practically no limit to its possibilities. Even the Canadians themselves are only now discovering that."

"With such a country, and with such possibilities in it for a young man, I am surprised, Dr. Sinclair, that you have forsaken it to seek your fortune on the China Coast."

"Seeking one's fortune, in the ordinary meaning of that phrase, is not the only thing worth living for, Mr. MacAllister. If that were the main object in life, I should have remained in Canada."

The keen grey eyes of the successful business man searched the young doctor's face, as if they would read his very thoughts. But Dr. Sinclair did not answer their questioning gaze, nor volunteer any explanation of his statement.

"Dr. Sinclair thinks with you," broke in Captain Whiteley, "that a man is better of seeing life in different parts of the world, even though he may end up by finding a snug harbour in some out-of-the-way corner."

"Yes," replied the merchant, "that is wise, if he can make any use of the experience gained."

"And I think that the doctor is nearly as much interested in missions as you are, Mr. MacAllister, judging from the way he visits them and studies them at every port."

"Is that so, Dr. Sinclair?" The keen eyes were again reading his face.

"I am interested in anything which proposes to make this old world better, and to help the men who are in it. That's why I chose medicine as a profession. I like to see things for myself. That's why I visit missions."

"And what are your conclusions?"

"I have hardly come to any conclusions yet. I have been only a few months on the Coast. Tourists and newspaper correspondents know all about the Far East after spending ten or twelve hours at each of the ports touched by the big liners. I am not a genius. I cannot form conclusions so rapidly. But here is a fellow-countryman of mine who knows more of missions now than, in all probability, I ever shall know."

As he was speaking a man had entered the dining saloon who would have attracted attention anywhere. It was not his dress or his stature which would have caused him to be noticed. Like the rest he wore a close-fitting suit of white drill. He was of barely middle height, though well-knit, wiry and erect. But the quick, nervous movements, the piercing dark eyes, which seemed to take in with one swift glance everything and everybody in the room, betokened the fiery energy of the soul which burned within. The high forehead, a trifle narrow perhaps, and the straight line of the mouth, with its firmly-closed lips, indicated

intensity of purpose and determination. A long black beard flowed down on his chest, contrasting sharply with the spotless white of his clothing.

"Mr. MacAllister, have you met Dr. MacKay?"

"I have not had that pleasure. Is this MacKay of Formosa?"

"I am MacKay."

"It is a great pleasure to me to meet you. I have heard so much of your work."

"I hope it may have been good."

"What else could it be? I am told that it is marvellous what you have accomplished in so short a time and almost alone."

"All have not that opinion of my work."

"All who spoke of it to me had that opinion. If what they told me is true, as I believe it is, how could they think otherwise?"

"Different men have different methods. So have different missions. Some can see no good in any but their own. My methods differ from those of others. They have not approved themselves to many of my seniors in the mission fields of China."

"I shall be glad to study your methods and see your results for myself."

"You shall have the opportunity."

The little group of officers and passengers were ere this seated at the table. In addition to those already mentioned there was the chief engineer, Watson, a Scot from the Clyde. There was also a passenger, a tea-buyer from New York.

The latter sat opposite Dr. MacKay at the mate's left. He had been listening to the conversation with a look of amused contempt on his flabby face. At the head of the table the captain, the engineer, Sinclair,

and MacAllister formed one group, who were soon deep in conversation. The tea-buyer took advantage of their preoccupation to address his neighbour across the table:

"So you are one of those missionaries."

"I am."

"Been gettin' a pretty fine collection of souls saved."

"I never saved a soul. Never expect to."

The mate chuckled to himself. But the point was lost on the tea-buyer. He thought that he had scored.

"Glad to see that you have come round to my point of view," he said; "and that there is one missionary honest enough to acknowledge it."

"And what is your point of view?"

"My point of view is that the red-skins and the black-skins and the brown-skins and the yaller-skins ain't got any souls, any more than a dog has."

"I do not know of any reason why the colour of a man's skin should affect his possession of a soul." MacKay spoke very quietly. The tea-buyer began to bluster.

"Reason or no reason, no man is going to make me believe that any of the niggers or Chinees or any of the rest of them have souls. Christian or no Christian, a nigger is a nigger, a Chinee is a Chinee, a Dago is a Dago, and a Sheeny is a Sheeny from first to last. All the missionary talk and missionary money-getting is nothing but damned graft, and the missionaries know it. Boy! One piecee whiskey-soda! Chop-chop!"

"All lite! Have got." And the "boy," a Chinese waiter perhaps sixty or seventy years old, quickly and noiselessly brought the bottles.

"I suppose you have had abundance of opportu-

nity to see and judge for yourself before you came to those conclusions, Mr. Clark," said MacKay.

There was that in his tone which would have made most men careful in their reply. But Clark was too self-confident to be wary, and repeated whiskeys and sodas had made him still less cautious.

"You may bet your bottom dollar I have," he replied. "I have known niggers and Dagos since I was knee-high to a grasshopper; and I have spent every season on the China Coast for the last five or six years. Oh, yes! I know what I'm talking about. I know them from the ground up."

"Doubtless you have visited many of the churches and chapels at the different ports where you have done business, and have for yourself seen the natives at worship."

"Me visit their churches! Not on your life! What do you take me for? I take no stock in any of their joss pidgin. I'd sooner go to a native temple than to a native church. But I've never been in either."

"Then I am afraid that I must assist your memory, Mr. Clark. You were in a native church."

"Me? Never!"

"If I am not mistaken, Mr. Clark, you were a passenger on the American bark *Betsy,* when she was wrecked on South Point, just outside of Saw Bay, a year ago last November."

"I was. But I don't see what that has to do with the subject we were discussing."

"The *Betsy's* boats were all smashed as soon as they touched water." MacKay was speaking in the dead level tones of suppressed emotion. But there was something so penetrating in his voice that the conversation at the other end of the table ceased, and

all were listening. "The Pe-po-hoan or Malay natives there went out through the surf in their fishing-boats and took every man off safely."

"Yes," replied Clark uneasily, "that's all right enough. But I reckon we could have made the shore ourselves."

"They took you to their village, called Lam-hong-o: they opened their church: the preacher gave up his own house to you: they made beds for you there and fed you."

"Damned poor accommodation, and damned poor grub! Boy! One piecee whiskey! Be quick about it!"

"All lite! No wanchee soda? My can catchee."

"No! Damn the soda!"

"All lite! All lite! Dammee soda!"

"I shall not say anything, Mr. Clark, of the return those white men with souls made to those brown men without souls who saved them. But I shall tell you what would have happened if the missionaries had not gone to Lam-hong-o; if there had not been a chapel there; if those brown-skins had not been Christians. Your ship would have been pillaged. Your heads would have been cut off. Your carcasses would have been fed to the sharks. But they were Christians. So they saved you. They fed you. They clothed you. They sent you home with all your belongings that they were able to save from the sea."

"Right you are, MacKay!" exclaimed Captain Whiteley, bringing his fist down on the table with a thump which threatened to throw on the floor the few dishes which the motion of the ship had not already dashed out of the retaining frames. "Right you are! Nearly thirty years ago I was on the *Teucer,* Captain

Gibson, as senior apprentice with rank of fourth mate. We were bound from Liverpool to Shanghai, but ran on the rocks a little farther down the East Coast than the *Betsy* did. There were thirty-one of us all told. We got ashore without the loss of a man. But when those devils of natives were done with us, there were only three of us left alive—the carpenter, an A.B., and myself. And we wished that we were dead. We would have been dead, too, before long. But after being worked as slaves for nine months, a Chinaman, who had been with the missionaries on the mainland, bought us from the Malays, and rowed us out to the first foreign ship he saw, the old *Spindrift*. She took us to Shanghai."

As the captain finished speaking MacKay rose and left the table. As was his wont, he had eaten sparingly and quickly. MacAllister was pressing Captain Whiteley for more details of his captivity among the head-hunters. McLeod was on the point of going out to his watch.

"That was score one on you, Clark," he said to his neighbour. "It doesn't pay to get too fresh even with a parson."

"I don't see that it's any of your pidgin to stick up for those fakirs," retorted the tea-buyer angrily.

"And I don't make it my pidgin," replied McLeod, "but it wasn't up to you to butt in on a man like MacKay the way you did. He gave you what you deserved."

"He needn't have flared up so and brought in all those mock-heroics about what those niggers of his did. I was only jollying him. He made things a great deal worse than they were."

"He didn't make things half as bad as they were,

Clark. What about the way the native preacher's daughter was used by the men to whom the preacher gave up his house and his church? Those brown-skins may have no souls. But MacKay believes they have. To my thinking they have a good deal more soul than the white-skins who did what was done there. You fellows went the limit. I wonder that MacKay let you off so easy."

"Oh!—Say!—Damn it, McLeod, that's going too far.—I'll not stand for that.—Say!—Here!—McLeod!—Wait and we'll break a bottle of champagne.—Here!—Boy! One piecee champagne!"

"No, thank you, Clark! It's my watch."

At the door the chief officer paused and called back:

"Say, Doc, when you are done feeding that big body of yours, come up on the bridge."

"All right, Mac. I'll be with you."

III

THE TYPHOON

WHEN Dr. Sinclair joined his friend on the bridge, a very marked change had come over the weather. It was intensely hot and sultry even where the circulation of air was freest. The wind was no longer blowing steadily from the southwest. It came in short puffs, dying away entirely between them, and veering around quarter of a circle. The short, broken waves of earlier in the evening were giving place to a long swell, coming up from the south. The movement of the ship was much easier. One or two passengers who had been unable to appear at dinner had recovered sufficiently to come on deck and escape the unbearable sultriness and stuffiness of the cabins.

"It's coming all right, doctor. Going to catch us sure. I don't care so much if it will only wait till daylight. I have no ambition to be floundering around this channel in a typhoon in the dark."

"How's the glass?"

"Away down, and still going. Haven't seen it so low since the big typhoon that cleaned up Hong-Kong Harbour a couple of years ago."

"What prospect is there that the big blow will hold off till morning?"

"Oh, pretty fair! The rain hasn't started yet, and on this coast we generally get splashes of rain for quite a few hours before the real thing begins. The

sea is rising, but not very fast yet. I don't think we'll see very bad weather till to-morrow."

Just then a merry ripple of woman's laughter sounded from away aft.

"Listen to that, Sinclair," said the mate. "That 'sweet Highland girl' of yours has evidently recovered sufficiently to come on deck. She's back there talking to the captain. I hope he may be as gallant as he sometimes is with our rare lady passengers, and may bring her up here to view the scenery. I should just like to see how you and she would act at your first meeting after the little tiff you had to-day. I'm interested in this case, doctor."

"What the deuce is the matter with you anyway, McLeod? You are talking a lot of rot to me about a young woman I have never seen before. Surely our experiences so far have been unpropitious enough. If it were not that I know about a little girl away back on your own Island, I should say that those moonlight promenades between Hong-Kong and Swatow had turned your head."

"Never mind, Doc. You know that a bad beginning makes a good ending. We people of Highland blood have a sort of second sight. We can see a bit into the future. I give you fair warning——"

There was another ripple of laughter, this time from forward, almost under the bridge. Then a woman's voice said:

"Oh, Captain Whiteley, I behaved myself most shockingly to-day."

"Surely not, Miss MacAllister. I couldn't conceive of your doing anything which wasn't charming."

"You told me that you were a Yorkshireman, Captain Whiteley. After such a speech as that I believe

that you must have been born near Blarney Castle. But I really did behave shamefully."

"How?"

"I said just awful things to your doctor."

"And what ever did Dr. Sinclair do to deserve those 'awful things'?"

"It was all your fault, Captain Whiteley. When you introduced him, you did not tell me that he was a doctor. I was sea-sick, and—and in just dreadful humour. He offered assistance. I did not know that he was a medical doctor, sauced him, and sent him about his business. And now what shall I do to make amends? It was all your fault——"

Anything more was lost to the ears of the two young men on the bridge, as she and the captain strolled slowly aft. But the rippling laughter reached their ears from time to time.

"Not very penitent, that!" laughed McLeod.

"Did you catch on to the reason she gave for saucing me, because she didn't know that I was a medical doctor? It was just when she found out that I was a doctor that she gave me the worst. Doesn't that beat the Dutch?"

> "'O woman! in our hours of ease,
> Uncertain, coy, and hard to please,'"

quoted McLeod.

In the light of the binnacle lamp the two friends looked into each other's eyes and laughed heartily. There was no cynicism, no cheap scoff at a woman's variableness. Instead there was that manly healthy-mindedness which can afford to laugh at her inexplicable ways, and honour and admire her still.

"By the way, McLeod, Dr. MacKay put it all over

Clark this evening, didn't he? I couldn't hear it all. Caught just the last few sentences. But I thought, from what I heard, that he was giving that old Mormon some knockout blows."

"You're right he was. But not half as much as he deserved. There are some white men who come out here who wouldn't be decent company for pigs. Clark is one of them. I'm no paragon of virtue, and I don't set up to preach to others. But there are a lot of us on the China Coast who try to keep decent enough not to be ashamed to go home once in a while and look our mothers and sisters in the face. There are a number of others who are simply rotten. They give us all a bad name. Mormon! Yes, worse than that! He could give points to old Abdul Hamid of Turkey."

A dash of warm rain driving before a sharp squall of wind struck them. The *Hailoong* was rising and falling with the mighty heave of the great swells which were following each other in regular succession from the south, each apparently bigger than the last. Captain Whiteley climbed the ladder to the bridge.

"Looks as if we were in for a bad night, Mr. McLeod."

"Yes, sir; and a worse day to follow."

"From the way the sea is rising, I'm afraid we cannot make Tamsui before it breaks."

"I am sure we cannot. I'll be satisfied if it only waits till daylight. We may have our hands full even with the light."

"I see that you have been making things snug. That's right. I'll have a look at everything before eight bells."

The captain went down to see that every preparation was made. McLeod spoke to his companion.

"You had better turn in, Sinclair," he said. "Get a bit of rest. You may be needed to-morrow. Good-night."

"Good-night, Mac."

. . . . . .

How long he was in his berth, how much of that time he slept, how much was spent in more or less conscious efforts to keep from being thrown about his cabin, Sinclair did not know. Accustomed though he was to the sea and to storms, there came a time when he could remain in his berth no longer. The angle at which the ship lay over told him that she was still holding in her course of the night before. His cabin was still on the lee side. He opened his door and stepped out, grasping the hand-rail with all his might to keep from being hurled off his feet.

Such a sight met his eyes as is rarely seen even by the sailor who spends his life at sea. The *Hailoong* was heeled over so far that it seemed hardly possible that she could right herself. It appeared to be the force of the wind rather than of the waves which had thrown her on her beam ends, for she did not recover herself as she ought to have done between the assaults of the billows. Held in that position by sheer wind pressure, she was deluged with water, rain, spray, torn crests of waves—the air was full of them, while ever and anon some mountainous roller, higher than its fellows, swept across her decks in a smother of green water and snowy foam.

So dark was it that at first Sinclair could scarcely tell whether it was night or day. Presently he made out some figures clinging desperately to anything which would afford a hold of safety. He made his way slowly towards them. They were McLeod and a

couple of the crew, looking to the lashings of the boats.

"Man, but it's a wild morning whatever!" roared the mate in his ear, lapsing into the idiom of his native province when his feelings were greatly stirred.

"How is she standing it?"

"Fine, so far! The starboard boats are smashed. No other damage done that I know of. But it's hard to tell what may be happening to starboard. Nothing to be seen but water!"

"The engines are working all right," said the doctor, as he noted the steady throb and quiver running like an undertone through the succession of terrific shocks the ship was receiving from the waves.

"Ay, and if they don't work all right, it'll not be Watson's fault. Yon's a grand man whatever."

The mate was off, traversing the tilted deck with marvellous agility and sureness of foot. The doctor went below to see if he could be of any service to the passengers. An hour or more passed, and he was again on deck, working his way forward to get as good a view as possible.

There in the shelter of the forward cabin stood Dr. MacKay. He was bareheaded; his long, black beard was blowing in the wind; his white suit was drenched as if he had been overboard; his keen eyes were striving to pierce the murk of cloud and rain and spray which turned the day almost into night. He seemed to be expecting to get a glimpse of the land.

He was not clinging to the hand-rail, but had his hands clasped behind his back. In spite of the distressing angle at which the ship's deck was tilted, in spite of her pitching and plunging, he seemed able to accommodate himself to her every movement. A man

of big stature and splendid physical development himself, Sinclair could not help pausing for some minutes to admire the poise and self-control of that comparatively small, spare, but erect and athletic figure. Then he stepped a little nearer and shouted:

"Do you often have storms like this in Formosa?"

"I have seen as bad; perhaps worse: but not often."

"Do you think that we're near Tamsui?"

"We must be."

"Can we make the harbour?"

"Not this time. We'll be late for the tide."

"A bad wind for putting about and getting out to sea again!"

"'Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of His hand?'"

At that instant a tremendous billow tumbled on board with such a weight of water that for some moments it seemed as if the *Hailoong* could not rise from beneath it. It caught two Chinese deck-hands, tore them from the bridge supports to which they were clinging, and swept them helplessly from starboard to port. Like a flash MacKay's left hand shot out, grasped a thin brown wrist, and swung one of the natives into the shelter of the cabin. But the other was dashed with terrific force against the deck-rail, where he lay motionless.

Sinclair sprang forward to help him. A second wave hurled him against the rail. He did not fall, but performed some weird gymnastics in the effort to keep his feet. And through the shrieking of the wind and the roar of the waves he heard a clear, joyous woman's laugh, the same as he had heard the night before. There in the shelter of the cabin, on almost the very spot where he had stood a moment before,

was Miss MacAllister, looking like the very spirit of the storm.

That was too much. Even Sinclair's usually unruffled temper began to give way. He caught up the helpless Chinese as if he had been a child, and with one quick spring was back to shelter.

"You seem to find it very amusing to see men hurt, Miss MacAllister," he said almost fiercely.

"I did not know that you were hurt, Dr. Sinclair, or I should not have laughed. I am so sorry."

"I'm not hurt," said the young man even more ferociously than before; "but this man is injured, seriously injured, I'm afraid. He's still unconscious."

"Oh, but I was not laughing at him. I was laughing at you. You would have laughed yourself if you could have seen the figure you cut going across the deck. Really, Dr. Sinclair, you would. I simply could not help it."

She looked up in his face with such a childlike innocence of expression, such confidence in the validity of the excuse, that even Dr. MacKay's somewhat stern face relaxed, and he turned away to hide a smile. As for Dr. Sinclair, he was helpless. He could not remain angry under the circumstances. His good-humoured laugh broke out as he replied:

"We must accept your confession, believe in your penitence, and grant you absolution."

He and MacKay went below with the injured Chinese, but in a few minutes reappeared on deck.

"I have not seen your father to-day, Miss MacAllister," said Dr. MacKay.

"He is in his stateroom with mother. She is very ill and he will not leave her."

"I must congratulate you on being so good a sailor.

You do not show a symptom of sea-sickness. That is quite remarkable in such a storm as this."

She shot a quick glance at Sinclair. He did not seem to be paying attention to what they were saying. But a quizzical smile playing about his eyes and mouth betrayed his interest in the conversation and his remembrance of what had taken place the evening before.

"Indeed, Dr. MacKay, I am not a good sailor at all. I have been sea-sick when there was only a little chop on the water. I was sea-sick yesterday. I should have been sick to-day, only this storm is so interesting that I have not had time to think about myself. When the officers and crew are being tossed about the deck by the waves, like dead leaves on a burn in autumn, it is really too interesting and amusing to be missed."

The rare smile lighted up the missionary's face as he glanced at Sinclair. The latter accepted the challenge, and a quick answer was on his tongue, when McLeod hurried past. He paused long enough to say to Sinclair:

"We're opposite the harbour, doctor, but we can't make it." Then he ran up on the bridge to join Captain Whiteley, who had not left it since midnight.

The words were intended for Sinclair alone. But a momentary lull in the storm made them louder than McLeod anticipated. Sinclair's two companions heard them. Yet neither showed any trace of concern—neither the mature man who had faced death scores of times on sea and on land, nor the young woman who had never knowingly been in danger before.

The same brief lull in the force of the wind brought

an equally momentary gleam of light through the darkness, which had up till then made noonday as gloomy as a late twilight. That gleam lighted for a few short seconds the landscape, and showed the storm-tossed company where they were. There directly ahead was the harbour of Tamsui, with the green and purple hills beyond. There on the nearest hill-top was the Red Fort which for two and a half centuries had braved such storms as this. Just beyond it were the low white bungalows of the mission, nearly hidden in the trees, where anxious eyes were watching for one who was on that battling ship. There, too, were the black balls hanging on the yard-arm at the signal station, saying that the tide was falling and the bar impassable. And the two white beacons for a single instant in line, and then widening apart, told the seamen that not only the tempest but the ebb tide, sweeping past the mouth of the harbour, was bearing them full upon the long curving beach of sand and shells which lay just to the north, where the surf was beating so furiously.

It takes time to tell. But in reality the respite lasted only a few seconds. Then the typhoon burst upon them again, with apparently redoubled violence. The darkness and the tumult of wind and waves were appalling.

"I wonder that you are not afraid," said Sinclair to Miss MacAllister, losing sight of their passages at arms in the seriousness of the situation.

"Should I be afraid?" was her reply.

"Most people would be."

"Are you afraid?"

"No: I do not think I am."

"Well, if you and the other officers who know what-

ever danger there may be are not afraid, I do not see why I should. They know the situation. I do not. When they tell me that there is serious danger, it will be time enough for me to be frightened."

Then for the first time Sinclair turned upon her a look of genuine admiration. Up to that moment she had been to him a mischievous, teasing, whimsical girl, with a quick wit and a ready tongue, who had been amusing herself at his expense. Now he saw another side to her character. There was a strong, brave nature under the light, changeful surface humours he had seen before.

If she were not afraid, there was at least one passenger who was. During the brief lull in the storm Clark, the tea-buyer, had come on deck. He had hardly reached it when the second fury of the typhoon burst upon them. He was now clinging to the hand-rail, with a face so flabby and ghastly that it was terrible to look upon. He was not sea-sick. He was too experienced a sailor for that. But he was afraid, horribly afraid. As the murk and gloom closed down again, and a gigantic wall of water broke over the ship, making her shudder and struggle like a living thing in death agony, Clark's voice was heard rising in a scream above the roar of the elements:

"MacKay, for God's sake, why don't you pray?"

MacKay looked at the man clinging there in abject terror. For a moment the keen, stern face softened as if in pity. Then it seemed as if the memory of something—was it of that wreck on the East Coast, and the evil deeds done in the chapel and the preacher's house there?—flashed through his mind. His face hardened again, and in a voice like ice he replied:

"Men who honour God when the days are fine do

not have to howl to Him for help in the time of storm."

What more the terror-stricken boaster of the evening before may have said was lost on his companions, for something was happening which engrossed all their attention. Down in the engine-room bells jangled sharply. The screw began to thresh the water at a tremendous rate. The *Hailoong* heeled still farther to port, began to forge ahead, bumped something, was caught by a mighty wave squarely on the stern, righted herself, and plunged forward. Then Sinclair realized what was happening.

"Everybody below!" he shouted. "Quick! The next will catch us on this side. Dr. MacKay, help Miss MacAllister."

Seizing the helpless Clark, he flung him by main strength into safety. They were scarcely under cover when a big roller tumbled on board on the port side. The *Hailoong* had turned almost completely around, and was fighting her way out to sea.

All afternoon and far into the night the brave little vessel battled with the waves to get back to the coast of the mainland. At last her anxious officers were rewarded by a distant, hazy gleam of light through the dense, water-laden atmosphere. Fifteen seconds passed, almost minutes in length. Again the white beam shot athwart the darkness. Then regularly and growing ever nearer, at intervals of fifteen seconds, the great white light flashed, showing the way to safety. It was Turnabout lighthouse, behind which lay Haitan Straits, winding among the islands, and between them and the mainland shore.

Into one of their many natural harbours the *Hailoong* cautiously felt her way, and cast anchor in

a quiet basin among the hills. There nothing but the torrents of rain falling and the roar of the surf beyond the island barrier remained to tell of the dangers they had passed through. Then Captain Whiteley left the bridge for the first time in more than twenty-four hours. Neither he nor his chief officer had found a chance to sleep for forty-eight hours.

For years afterwards only three persons knew exactly what happened on the bridge that day. Then when Captain Whiteley was commanding a Castle boat running to the Cape, and McLeod had a big trans-Pacific liner, the quarter-master, who with a Chinese sea-cunny had been at the *Hailoong's* wheel, felt absolved from the promise he had made to McLeod to keep the secret, and told what he knew.

When the momentary lifting of the clouds showed the captain that the wind combined with the ebb of the tide had carried them past the line of entrance to the harbour, towards the shoaling beach on which the surf was beating, he shouted to his mate:

"My God, McLeod, we're lost!"

"Not so bad as that yet, sir!" was the reply.

"There isn't room to turn and clear that shoal water. To starboard it's stern on: to port it's broadside on."

"We haven't tried, sir!"

"Then, for God's sake, McLeod, try!"

The words had hardly left the captain's lips when the engineer received the signal for full steam ahead, and the mate, springing into the wheel-house, flung himself on the wheel, and with the combined strength of three men forced it over. The *Hailoong* responded gallantly. Her head swung directly towards the dreaded shoal, passed it, and pointed out to sea. So

close was she that when the wind caught her stern it dropped just for an instant between two rollers on the hard, smooth sand. But the next one lifted her, gave her churning screw a chance, and the ebb tide, which a moment before had been threatening to send her broadside to destruction, now helped to bear her past the long receding curve of the sand bank, out into the open sea.

"That was the tightest corner I ever was in," Whiteley used to say afterwards; "and it was McLeod who took us out."

But McLeod, in a moment of confidence, said to Sinclair:

"Man, but that engineer, Watson, is the jewel whatever! He let his second handle the levers, while himself held pistols to the heads of the Chinese stokers, and told them to shovel or die in their tracks. That's what saved us. He's a jewel. I never saw his likes whatever."

IV.

PARRIED

IT was a bright, calm summer day, perfect in its tropical splendour, when the *Hailoong* arrived off the port of Tamsui. On the blue, smiling sea and rich green shore not a trace remained of the furious storm of two days before. Where, save for one brief gleam, all had been hidden from sight by the blackness of the tempest and the deluge of rain and spray, there now lay before the ship's company as fair a landscape as the eye could wish to look upon.

Immediately in front of them was the broad, brimming river, its sand-spits and oyster-beds hidden beneath the waters of the full tide. On the right or southern shore a mountain rose from its margin in an isolated peak to the height of seventeen hundred feet, clothed with dense verdure to the very summit. To the left, on a hill and plateau two hundred feet high, were the red brick buildings of the old Dutch fort, the residence of the British consul, and the mission schools, and the white bungalows of the missionaries and customs officers. At the foot of this hill and along the river bank, the mean buildings of the Chinese town of Tamsui straggled off until lost to sight around the curve. Its limits were marked by the little forest of masts of the junks which lay along in front of the town. In the centre of the river, directly opposite the mission houses, a trim gunboat rested at anchor. Over all rose the Taitoon Mountains in suc-

cessive ranges of green and purple and blue, the highest and farthest summits blending with the unclouded sky.

Exclamations of delight burst from those of the passengers who had never looked upon the scene before.

"Father, isn't this just glorious?"

"It certainly is. I have often heard of the beauty of Formosa, but this first view quite exceeds my expectations."

"It was worth while experiencing that typhoon and being delayed for two days. It heightens the enjoyment of a scene like this. We should not have appreciated it so much if we had been favoured with a peaceful voyage. Do you not think so, Dr. MacKay?"

"Perhaps you are right, Miss MacAllister. But Formosa is always beautiful to me. It never loses its charm. I have gone up and down it for more than a dozen years. I never grow weary of it. It never palls upon me. It is still to me as the first day I saw it 'Ilha Formosa,' the Beautiful Isle. It always will be Beautiful Formosa."

There was an accent in his reply which spoke of more than love for the scenery. Miss MacAllister was not slow to detect it. She heard in it the passionate devotion of a heroic soul to the cause to which he had given his life. It struck a responsive chord somewhere in her own being. It was with a softened voice, a voice expressive of sympathy and admiration, that she said:

"You love the island and its people, Dr. MacKay?"

"I do."

And Sinclair, who chanced to be standing near, as once before during the storm, saw the veil of her sur-

face waywardness lifted and caught a glimpse of a character beneath which was capable of serious purpose.

"Mr. McLeod, that sampan over there with the flag is hailing us."

It was the captain's voice which broke in on the conversation of the group on deck.

"Yes, sir," replied the chief. "It came out from the pilot village, and has been waiting for us."

"I wonder what's up?"

"I don't know, sir. Hold on, they are signalling from the Customs."

In an instant the chief officer had a glass focussed on the flagpole at the customs offices. The other officers and the passengers stood silent while the little fluttering oblongs and triangles of red, white, yellow, and blue talked.

"What do they say, chief?"

"Wait for a pilot. Danger."

"A pilot! The devil! What do they take us for? Some tramp which has never been here before? Perhaps the typhoon shifted the bar."

While he spoke, McLeod had swung his glass upon the approaching Chinese boat. Two fishermen, standing up and pushing forward on their long oars, were driving it rapidly through the water. Their bodies, naked to the waist, and their legs, bare save for the shortest of cotton trousers, were covered with perspiration and shone in the sun like burnished copper. In the stern sat a Chinese in a dress which was an indescribable cross between Chinese official robes and a Western uniform.

"That's a Chinese military or naval officer of some kind, sir," said the mate. "They must be in a mix-up

with somebody. Perhaps the French have taken it into their heads to annex Formosa."

The sampan shot alongside, and with unexpected agility the Chinese officer clambered up the sea-ladder.

"The captain will please to excuse me," he said in slow, precise English, "for offering to pilot his ship into the harbour. The captain's skill as a pilot is well known to me. The government of China regrets to find itself in a state of war with the government of France. Therefore, His Excellency, the Provincial Governor of Formosa, has laid down mines for the defence of the port of Tamsui. As I have knowledge of the position of the mines, he has commanded me to pilot the captain's ship past the mines into the harbour."

He concluded his little speech with a profound bow. The captain's reply was brief:

"The ship is yours, sir."

Another profound bow, and the Chinese officer was in charge.

Captain Whiteley turned to Mr. MacAllister.

"I am sorry, sir," he said, "that the French have taken the notion to transfer their scrimmage with the Chinese to Formosa just at this moment. It will interfere with your plans."

"It probably will interfere somewhat with our movements. But, on the other hand, it may be of advantage to us. We are out to learn, and are not hampered by lack of time. I am deeply interested in your pilot. He seems perfectly at home, and to know his business thoroughly."

"Not the slightest doubt of that! This is not the first time he has navigated a ship. Very likely he has

spent years of apprenticeship on board a British or American man-of-war."

"Is China getting her young man trained like that?"

"They are getting themselves trained. The government isn't awake yet. But many of the young men are. The old China is passing. This is one of the pioneers of the new China which is coming. It will take time. But when it does come, mark my words, the Western nations will have to sit up and take notice."

Meanwhile the *Hailoong,* under the command of her Oriental pilot, crossed the bar and zigzagged her way slowly up the river, following invisible channels through the field of hidden mines until she reached her berth at the customs jetty.

Leaning on the rail, Sinclair watched with keenest interest the little crowd of foreigners and natives gathered on the shore and jetty, waiting for the passengers to disembark. He had met a number of them on a former trip to this port, and occasionally waved his hand or gave a greeting to some one he recognized.

There was a sprinkling of officers of the Imperial Maritime Customs, sunburned young Britons for the most part, who had taken service under the brilliant Irishman whose genius had saved the Chinese Government from bankruptcy. There were the representatives of the various foreign business firms, all British, glad to leave their hongs for an hour, to experience the little excitement caused by the coming of the weekly steamer, and to welcome those whom they had almost given up for lost. The foreign community doctor had found time from his not very pressing duties to come down to the landing and call a "Wie geht es Ihnen?" to his confrère on board the *Hailoong.*

Contrasting with the close-fitting snow-white garments of the foreigners were the long, blue, or mauve silk gowns with, in some cases, sleeveless yellow jackets over them, of the Chinese Christian preachers and students who were there to do honour to Dr. MacKay. Darting back and forth, chattering, screaming, quarrelling in high-pitched nasal tones, were bronzed, sweating, almost naked coolies, each trying to get ahead of the other and earn the most cash.

It was a scene of which Sinclair never tired. Fascinated by this strange mingling of the East and the West he leaned over the rail, watching every movement. A quick step approached him:

"Dr. Sinclair, as soon as your duties here are done, you will come to my house and be my guest. The college coolies will bring up your baggage. If I am not there, Mrs. MacKay will receive you and look after your wants."

"Thank you, Dr. MacKay. I shall be very glad to accept your hospitality for a time. I shall probably be with you to-morrow."

MacKay was gone as quickly as he had come. A minute or two later his native converts were receiving him with the oft-repeated salutation: "Peng-an, Kai Bok-su! Kai Bok-su, peng-an!" (Peace, Pastor MacKay! Pastor MacKay, peace!).

One of the oldest preachers walked off with him up the narrow, climbing path. The rest tailed out in single file behind.

There was another quicker and lighter step, accompanied by the rustle of a woman's garments. Sinclair turned to find himself face to face with Miss MacAllister. Her eyes were sparkling with mischief, her hand was extended in farewell:

"Good-bye, Dr. Sinclair. I have enjoyed this voyage so much. I hope that we shall meet again. But, if we should not, I shall never forget your rescue of that Chinese, the heroism and the grace you displayed. Really, I never shall."

It was premeditated, and she intended to escape the moment the shaft was shot. But Sinclair was not so nonplussed as he had been at their first encounter. He held her hand firmly so that she could not get away, long enough to reply:

"Good-bye, Miss MacAllister. I am delighted to know that I have given you pleasure. I should be happy to make a similar exhibition of myself any day, if it would only contribute to your enjoyment."

He released her hand and she escaped into the saloon. The colour which overspread her face was not all the flush of triumph. This time she had met the unexpected.

"Well parried, Doc," said a voice beside him. "That fair tyrant was beginning to think that you were an easy mark. But you gave her as much as you got this time. . . . Here's a chit for you. . . . From the consulate."

"Where's the boy?" said Sinclair, taking the letter McLeod held out to him. "I had better sign his chit-book."

"You don't need to. I signed for you. There's the boy going back," replied the mate, pointing to a Chinese in the dark blue and red uniform of the British consul's service, climbing the steep path up to where the old Dutch fort and the consul's house crowned the lofty hill above them. "Don't think that you are the only one to get a *billet-doux* like that. The cap-

tain and I are among the favoured. It's a bid to dinner at the consulate to-morrow evening."

Sinclair opened and glanced at the note. It was a brief and formal invitation:

"Mr. and Mrs. Beauchamp request the pleasure of the company of Dr. Donald Sinclair at dinner at 7:30 on Tuesday the 5th instant.
H. B. M. Consulate,
Tamsui,
August 4th, 1884."

"I guess I'll be able to go. Though I promised to put myself in MacKay's hands to-morrow, and he may have something else on for me."

"No danger! MacKay knows everything that's going on as well as the next one. He will not ask you to do anything which will conflict with a dinner at the consulate. If he's at home, he'll be there himself. You just lay out to be present. Mrs. Beauchamp is famous for the chow she provides. Where she gets it out here off the earth, I don't know. And for entertaining guests, she and Beauchamp haven't their equals on the Coast."

"You're a great pleader, Mac. I'll give you my word. I'll go."

"And the Highland girl will be there."

"Look here, McLeod, you're gone batty on that subject. I know an address in Prince Edward Island. If you continue to talk as foolishly as you have been doing the last few days, I'll write and peach on you."

"Oh, no, you won't! But just to change the subject, look at old De Vaux meeting them. He's so excited that I shouldn't wonder to see him take an apoplectic fit."

Mr. MacAllister, his wife, and daughter had just left the boat. A large, fleshy man, with a clean-shaven,

florid face, bulging blue eyes, and all his features except the double chin bunched unnecessarily close together, was hurrying forward to meet them in a state of perspiring excitement and nervousness. He was carrying his white sun-helmet in one hand, mopping his brows with a huge handkerchief held in the other, and all the while the mid-summer tropical sun was beaming down on his shining face, and on his head with its quite inadequate covering of hair.

"Mr. MacAllister! . . . You cannot know what pleasure it gives me to welcome you to Formosa. . . . 'Pon my soul, you cannot! . . . I have been twenty years in Formosa, and this is the greatest pleasure I have experienced. . . . 'Pon my honour, it is!"

"Glad to see you again, Mr. De Vaux. If I remember right, the last time we saw each other was in our office at Amoy, five years ago last May."

"That is so, Mr. MacAllister. . . . Lord, what a memory you have! . . . I don't know another man on the China Coast who would have remembered a date like that. . . . 'Pon my soul, I do not!"

"Mr. De Vaux, I wish you to meet my wife and daughter. My dear, allow me to present Mr. De Vaux. My wife, Mr. De Vaux. My daughter, Mr. De Vaux."

The stout man bent double in profound bows, dropping his hat to the very ground, gurgling something almost inarticulate with excitement:

"Mrs. MacAllister! . . . I am so pleased! . . . Bless my soul! Miss MacAllister. . . . This is the happiest moment of my life. . . . 'Pon my honour, it is!"

Above them on the deck Sinclair was saying to McLeod:

"Who is this De Vaux, anyway? Of course, I know that he is chief agent in Formosa of MacAllister,

Munro Co. But who is he and what are his antecedents?"

"That is just the question," replied McLeod. "We know, and we don't know. We know that the Honourable Lionel Percival Dudley de Vaux is the oldest known son of the late Lord Eversleigh, the oldest brother or half-brother of the present lord. But why he is out here sweltering and swearing in this steam-bath of a climate while his younger brother enjoys the cool shade of his ancestral parks and halls, and holds down a seat in the Lords, no one seems to know. Some say that he is the son of the late lord by a Scotch marriage in his wild-oat stage; some that he is a son born to the late lord by the countess dowager before wedlock. At any rate, he was shipped to the Far East as a boy, and here he has been these more than twenty years, pensioned, they say, to keep out of England."

"He seems to be very excitable," said Sinclair, as he looked down at the stout, perspiring individual, who was still holding his hat in his hand, still bowing, still gurgling in a high-toned voice, while his face and head grew redder and shinier every moment.

"Yes, he is now. When he came out first, they say that he was a regular Lord Chesterfield in his manners. But he was here alone for years. No comforts but drink and a yellow woman. He took to both. These with the isolation and the climate have made him what he is. When he meets a white woman he loses his head completely. Any little irritation in business sends him right up in the air. Then he swears. We call him old De Vaux. In fact he has hardly reached middle age. The life here is killing him. If he doesn't die of apoplexy one of those days,

he'll commit suicide. And he's not a bad old soul. Just the victim of his parent's wrong-doing. Poor old De Vaux!"

Just then they heard Miss MacAllister saying in a tone of utmost concern:

"Mr. De Vaux, will you not put on your hat? I am so afraid that your head will get sunburned."

"A sunstroke you mean, my dear," said her father, "a sunstroke."

"No, father, I mean sunburned. Really, Mr. De Vaux's head is becoming quite crimson."

"Lord! . . . Miss MacAllister! . . . How good of you to notice that! . . . Bless my soul! . . . I never thought of it. . . . 'Pon my honour, I didn't! . . . A man should put on his hat in a sun like this. . . . 'Pon my soul, he should! . . ."

He was still executing a sort of war-dance around the ladies and still holding his hat in his hand. Mr. MacAllister took him gently by the arm.

"My dear De Vaux," he said, "it has been exceedingly kind of you to come down to meet us as you have done, and to provide those sedan chairs, for I can see that it is you who have engaged them. With your permission, we'll go to our quarters now. The captain promised to see that our baggage was sent over at once. After tiffin, I am sure that you will be so good as to accompany me to call on the consul."

As the four chairs were borne off along the narrow road by the shore, McLeod said to Sinclair:

"MacAllister's a trump. He saved the situation. Old De Vaux was just ready to go up like a balloon, and—swear."

And Sinclair thought to himself as he turned away:

"Miss MacAllister has found another victim."

V

INTRODUCTIONS

A FEW minutes before the time appointed for dinner, Sinclair strolled over to the consulate. A couple of the I.M.C. officers joined him on the way. Out on the broad verandah the consul and his wife were receiving their guests, taking every advantage possible of the slight coolness of the evening air. None had yet gone inside. Some lounged on the verandah. Most were strolling about the grounds, on the gravelled walks or the green of the tennis lawn between the house and the old Dutch fort.

Many coloured paper lanterns hung from the cocoanut and areca palms, were nestled in the clumps of oleanders, or were strung on wires around the verandah. On the side of the house shaded from the sunset glow, native servants were already lighting them.

It was a scene of rare beauty. The broad river gleaming between its lofty banks: the green mountain towering up on the opposite shore: the glassy ocean stretching away to where the sun had sunk to rest in its waters: the old fort lifting its dark, massive walls and battlements, undecayed by centuries of tropical storm and tropical sun, against the pale yellow and rose and purple of the sunset sky: the strange, rich vegetation of a tropic clime, amidst which moved men and women in conventional evening dress, as they would have done in the drawing-rooms of England.

Save for the shrilling of the cicadas and the quiet voices of the hosts and their guests, the air was as still as if it had never known disturbance. Yet all that day, from eight A.M. till nearly sundown, it had quivered with the roar of heavy ordnance and the rattle of machine guns. Less than twenty miles away, across those hills to the east, the French fleet had poured a tempest of shot and shell from its long naval guns and mitrailleuses into the Chinese forts at Keelung, and the Chinese had replied from their Krupps and Armstrongs till their defences tumbled about their ears. Now the game of war was over for the day, and all seemed as peaceful as if it had never been played. But the conversation of the guests continually reverted to the tempest which had so suddenly broken upon the island.

Just at the hour set for dinner the little gunboat, the *Locust,* which had been away since early dawn, was seen steaming up the harbour. As she passed the consulate, a boat dropped from her and pulled swiftly in towards the jetty. At the sight of it the host and hostess led the way into the brightly-lighted drawing-room.

"Commander Gardenier has made jolly good time," said the consul. "We can well afford to wait a few minutes for him. He'll be here directly. In the meantime we can get acquainted."

While the host was busy with introductions, Sinclair had time to consider the company. He had met almost all before. But he had not by any means satisfied his keen interest in their personal characteristics. One by one he studied the men and women before him, taking in with the celerity of one who has long practised it as an art the physical type of each, and

estimating the mental peculiarities which lay behind the outward forms.

The first was the consul. Of barely middle height, but perfectly proportioned, every movement betrayed muscles trained and developed by consistent physical exercise. The keen, bright blue eyes, looking out of a sunburned face, the small, closely-clipped moustache, the nervous, vigorous movements, hardly needed the confirmation of his short, quick sentences and decisive accents to tell the story of his character. The interests of his country would not suffer at his hands for lack of courage or decision.

Mrs. Beauchamp was a small woman, somewhat delicate in appearance. Her slight figure was well set off by the rich simplicity of her evening gown. The quiet ease of her manners spoke of a lifetime spent in the atmosphere of polite society.

In sharp contrast was Mrs. MacAllister—large, stout, middle-aged, with raven black hair, and the bright colour characteristic of her Highland people still warm in her cheeks. Considering the occasion and the tropic heat, she was over-dressed. More noticeable still was the fact that she was not at home in her present surroundings. With her husband she had risen from a humble station in life to wealth, and the entrée into social circles which wealth gives. The wife of the great London merchant and financier must not be overlooked. Oh, no! Indeed, she had no desire to be overlooked. She had brought from an almost menial position an exaggerated reverence for the gentry, and the ambition to associate with them. Yet she was never at ease in their company. Her husband showed the poise of one who could adapt himself to any position in life, and manifested no em-

barrassment or awkwardness in any company. But Mrs. MacAllister was never free from constraint at social functions, and her attempts to appear at home sometimes resulted in disaster.

There was another married woman present—Mrs. Thomson, the wife of Dr. MacKay's colleague. Youthful in face and figure, she was dressed plainly, almost to the verge of severity. But her quick wit and vivacious manner gathered a little group of the guests about her, and more than atoned for the commonplace dulness of her husband.

Standing among some tropic plants just outside a French window, Sinclair, unobserved himself, was able to study each one in succession. But ever and anon his eyes turned to where nearly half the men present had gathered around the only other woman who was there to grace the occasion. Miss MacAllister was facing him, and he could note every play of expression on her countenance. There was a rapid exchange of conversation, and she had an answer for every one. The rippling laughter he had heard on the deck of the *Hailoong* now sounded over the murmur of voices in the drawing-room.

"What a queenly stature and bearing!" Sinclair thought to himself.

It was true. Miss MacAllister was taller than all but one of the little circle of men gathered about her. She held her small head, with its wavy crown of rich brown hair, as if she were proud of her commanding height. Her eyes, so dark a blue that in the light of the candles they seemed black, looked right over the heads of the men of average stature.

Yet, if her height was masculine, there was nothing masculine about her figure. Though well propor-

tioned and vigorous, it gave the general impression of slightness. Neither was there a trace of masculinity about the face. It was thoroughly feminine, with its somewhat low forehead, its small, straight nose, the rich, Highland colour in the softly-rounded cheeks, the small chin, and the lips parted in merry laughter—a thoroughly girlish face.

Keeping himself in the shadow, and looking at her in the bright light of the drawing-room, Sinclair thought that rarely, if ever, had he seen a more strikingly beautiful woman. He wondered that he had not noticed it before. Then he laughed to himself as he remembered that, during their short acquaintance, he had so often suffered from her raillery that he had been in little humour for appreciation or admiration.

"A pretty picture, that!" said McLeod's voice at his shoulder. "I am glad to see you enjoying it, doctor."

"Until I get better acquainted I prefer looking on to taking part in the conversation. It's an interesting study."

"Isn't she a beauty? That evening rig sets her off to perfection." McLeod generally used nautical terms to describe dress, on which he was not an expert.

"I see that you are still on the same tack," replied Sinclair, with a laugh. "But really I agree with you that the 'rig' does suit her, and that she is a beauty. Who is that tall, dark fellow who is trying to monopolize the conversation with her?"

"English remittance man. A younger son, no better than he ought to be. Sent out here to be rid of him. In a moment of weakness the I.G.* gave him a

*Sir Robert Hart, Inspector-General of Chinese customs, was familiarly known as the I.G.

place on the customs. . . . But here comes Beauchamp."

"Is this where you are, Sinclair? I have been looking around for you. Have you met every one yet?"

"I believe so, Mr. Beauchamp, except the tall gentleman talking to Miss MacAllister."

"Come along then and I'll introduce you before I have to receive Gardenier. . . . Miss MacAllister, I am sure you will pardon me for interrupting your conversation. I should like to make these gentlemen acquainted. . . . Dr. Sinclair, the Honourable Reginald Carteret of the Imperial Maritime Customs staff. . . . Will you excuse me now? I see Commander Gardenier at the door."

Sinclair saluted Carteret with the frank, easy courtesy which suited so well his big, powerful frame and pleasant countenance. The acknowledgment was a slight, stiff bow and a brief:

"Glad to make your acquaintance, I'm sure."

The tone and the words stung Sinclair. His face lost something of its good-humour. His lips closed tightly. A gleam of anger showed for an instant in his blue eyes. The signs of irritation passed quickly. But it was in a colder and more formal tone that he uttered some commonplaces, to which Carteret made a commonplace reply.

Slight as were the changes of tone and manner, they were not lost on Miss MacAllister. She had noted the unconscious ease with which Sinclair had met Carteret, and had been surprised at the superciliousness, almost insolence, of the latter's response. She had caught that momentary flash of the eye, betraying the rising anger, immediately brought under control.

Then as the two young men exchanged a sentence or two of polite formalities, she mentally compared them. Both were tall men—with the possible exception of her father, much the tallest men in the company. Neither was less than six feet in height. The Englishman was the slighter of the two, though fairly athletic in appearance. He was black-haired and dark-eyed. A black moustache and well-trimmed pointed beard gave him a foreign appearance and made him look older than his five-and-twenty years.

The Canadian was equally tall, but broad-shouldered and deep-chested. The massive head with its abundance of loosely-curled hair, so light in colour as to be almost golden, the clear-cut features, fair complexion, and singularly bright blue eyes reminded her of pictures of idealized Vikings she had seen at home. Perhaps it was more than a fanciful resemblance. Sinclair's forefathers had come from Caithness to Canada, and the blood of Norsemen probably flowed in his veins. Though older by a couple of years than the Englishman, Sinclair's fair, clean-shaven face looked years younger than Carteret's. In spite of the maturity of the broad, white forehead, it was almost a boyish face, with its cheerful, eager outlook on life.

"Allow me to apologize, Miss MacAllister, for having interrupted your conversation with Mr. Carteret. The consul simply projected me into the midst of it."

"A heavy projectile, Dr. Sinclair, for so light an explosive! With the thunder of the bombardment still in our ears, I suppose that we cannot help talking in terms of cannonading. But I assure you that no apologies are necessary. I am ever so glad to meet again a companion of our eventful voyage."

She looked so charmingly sincere that Sinclair wondered to himself if she really meant it.

"Attention! The consul is marshalling the company for dining-room parade," said Mr. Boville, the commissioner of customs.

"Exactly seven minutes and forty seconds late," said Carteret, looking at his watch. "Beauchamp will not recover from this for a year. He'll have to report it to the Foreign Office and ask that his leave be postponed six months as a punishment."

"Why? Is Mr. Beauchamp so particular about being punctual?" asked Miss MacAllister.

"Latest for an engagement he was ever known to be, three minutes and fifteen seconds. That was because of a typhoon."

"Pity that there were not more like him!" said the commissioner tartly.

"Commander Gardenier, you will conduct my wife to the dining-room. Mr. MacAllister, will you take in Mrs. Thomson? And Mr. Boville, Miss MacAllister. The less fortunate gentlemen will follow."

Offering his arm to Mrs. MacAllister, the consul led the way.

VI

ON THE DEFENSIVE

THE commissioner of customs had the honour of conducting Miss MacAllister to the table, because his official position and his long years of residence in the island gave him precedence over the newcomers, or those who were engaged in mercantile pursuits. In appearance he was ill-suited to be the escort of such a young and queenly person. He was middle-aged, very bald, rotund in figure, and so short that his head was hardly level with her shoulder.

When she took Boville's proffered arm, she realized how absurd their disproportionate statures must appear. Involuntarily she glanced around to find Sinclair. He was just offering his arm to McLeod, for lack of a lady companion. A moment later she heard their voices at her back, and knew that they had taken their places in the little procession immediately behind her and the commissioner. Then the voices ceased, and instinctively she felt that they were laughing silently. Her figure stiffened, and she held her head a trifle higher than before. Her escort made the most of his five feet one or two, but do his best he couldn't get the shiny top of his head above her shoulder.

As they entered the dining-room she caught a glimpse of McLeod's face. He was laughing undisguisedly. When she took her place at the table she found herself facing Sinclair. He was not looking at her. He was watching the last of the guests filing

in, and was trying to look unconcerned. But there was a suspicious quivering of his mouth and a sparkle in his eyes. Her quick Celtic blood took fire at once.

"He's laughing at me," she thought to herself. "How dare he? There's no limit to the presumption of those Canadians. But I'll teach him."

Strange to say, she quite forgot how she had laughed at him on board the *Hailoong*. Stranger still, she seemed to take no offence at the laughter of McLeod, who also was a Canadian.

As soon as they were seated, the natives out on the verandah began to pull the cords; the punkah began to wave to and fro and creak. It wouldn't have been a punkah if it hadn't creaked. The consul, who had nerves, had striven to put an end to the creaking, but had failed. The creak was an essential part of the punkah. But there was no creaking about the movements of the waiters. Noiseless as spectres, the "boys" in their long blue gowns moved quickly in and out, back and forth, their felt-soled shoes sliding silently over the smooth tiled floor.

"Commander Gardenier, we have all been models of patience. No one has asked you how the day went at Keelung. But you cannot expect us to wait much longer. Such virtue would be superhuman. Do tell the company what all the noise was about to-day and who got the better of it."

A murmur of applause greeted the consul's request, and all eyes turned towards the bronzed sailor who sat beside Mrs. Beauchamp. He seemed a little uncomfortable under the expectant gaze of so many eyes and answered modestly:

"I do not know that I can tell you much about it. The French had three ships at it. On their part the

Chinese in the big new fort on the east side of the harbour and in the old fortifications on the west side were engaged. Between them they put up a pretty scrap for a while."

"Really! Did the Chinese actually pretend to offer any resistance to the French?" inquired Carteret.

"There was no pretending. They offered resistance, and a very effectual one for a time," replied Gardenier. "You know, Beauchamp, the lie of the harbour?"

The consul nodded.

"The old corvette *Villars* was anchored in the inner harbour, opposite the south side of Palm Island. She pelted away with her guns and mitrailleuses at the new fort at a thousand-yard range. The little gunboat *Lutin* lay close in shore on the west side and hammered the old fortifications there. Admiral Lespès, in *La Galissonnière,* lay in the outer harbour and raked both sides with his long guns."

"I should think that he would be in little danger there," said one of the merchants. "The Chinese gunners couldn't hit a range of mountains, let alone a ship, at that range."

"That is just where you are mistaken. They put three holes into *La Galissonnière* just above waterline, almost as soon as the game commenced. If they didn't beat off the French to-day, it was not the fault of their gunners. It was because their works could not stand the French fire. The Chinese worked their guns till their forts were knocked to pieces."

"Did the French land any men?" inquired Boville.

"Yes," replied Gardenier. "When we left Keelung, a landing-party of marines had just hoisted the French flag on the ruined Chinese fort."

"Then Keelung is in the hands of the French?"

"Yes. That is if by Keelung you mean a strip of a few hundred feet wide around the harbour. But the hills all around that again are occupied by the Chinese."

"Little difference that will make," said Carteret. "The Celestials have had all they want. At the first sign of a French advance they'll run, and never stop running till they reach Taipeh."

"I'm not so sure about that," replied Gardenier, a trifle coldly. "In the first place, the French have no land forces with which to make an advance. In the second place, the Chinese are better fighters than you give them credit for, Mr. Carteret. All they need is a good leader, and I believe that they have such a man in Liu Ming-chuan."

"And in the third place," said Beauchamp, "the Keelung climate is enough to defeat the French if there were no Chinese. By the time their transports arrive the northeast monsoon will be about due. Then the Lord help them! One of the wettest spots on earth. Boville, what is the annual rainfall over there?"

"One hundred and fifty-eight inches on the average. One year it lacked only an inch and a half of the two hundred."

"One hundred and fifty-eight inches," repeated MacAllister. "That does not convey much meaning to my mind. How does it compare with some climates we do know? That of London, for example?"

"Ashamed to say that I don't know London's rainfall," said the consul. "All I remember is that it seemed to do little else but rain there when I was a boy. Boville? . . . Carteret? . . . You are Lon-

doners. . . . What? Do none of you know? . . . Shocking ignorance!"

"I do not want to put forward my opinion on the climate of London in a company of Englishmen," said Sinclair; "but I believe the rainfall there is about twenty-five inches."

"Easy seeing that you have not lived in England," said Carteret, with the same contemptuous tone he had already used when introduced to Sinclair. "A hundred inches would be more like it."

"Dr. Sinclair is right," said Commander Gardenier, who had been consulting a tiny memorandum book. "No considerable part of the British Isles exceeds eighty inches, and London has twenty-five."

Miss MacAllister flashed a quick glance at Sinclair. There was admiration in it; admiration that he should know this simple scientific fact which those who had better opportunities did not know. She had noted this peculiarity in him before, his remarkable fund of accurate information on all manner of subjects.

Then her mind took a curious twist. What right had he to know the rainfall of London? What business had this colonial to know a fact about London which a company of Londoners did not know? It was another proof of his presumption. She'd take some of his self-confidence out of him. She'd teach him.

The conversation drifted on about the climate, the war, the probability of a bombardment at Tamsui, the prospects of an easy victory which most conceded to the French.

"I believe that you are rating the Chinese too low," said the consul, in reply to a number of expressions of such views. "From what I have seen of the new

Imperial Commissioner, Liu Ming-chuan, he will give the French more than they bargained for. As Commander Gardenier says, leaders are what the Chinese need. When they get a few more men trained in Western ideas, they are going to surprise the world. What do you think, Mr. De Vaux? You have known them longer than any of us."

"'Pon my soul, Beauchamp, I believe you are right! . . . The Chinese are a smarter people than they get credit for. . . . 'Pon my honour, they are! . . . And they're honest, too. . . . The last time I was in America, a man I had business with in New York said that he did not know how I could stand living among those pig-tails, as he called them. . . . He wouldn't live among them for a hundred thousand a year. . . . It vexed me. . . . I told him that I'd rather do business with a good Chinese firm any time than with some Yankees. . . . 'Pon my soul, I would! . . . Do you know, that duffer cheated me the very next day!"

There was a burst of laughter at De Vaux's injured tone.

"It's a fact," he continued, his face and head growing redder and his voice higher at every sentence. "And to think of that scoundrel casting reflections on the Chinese! . . . Bless my soul! . . . It vexes me so! . . . By——! . . . I mean it's a thundering shame the way the Chinese have been treated by some white people."

"What Mr. De Vaux says is true enough," said the consul. "I am sorry Dr. MacKay is not here. He could give us more information about the preparations the Chinese have made than any one else. But I understand that he has gone over to the vicinity of

Keelung to look after some of his converts who are in the danger zone. Is that not so, Dr. Sinclair?"

"Yes," replied Sinclair. "He could hardly wait for tiffin yesterday, he was in such a hurry to catch the first launch up river."

"I saw him landing from the launch at Twatutia," added one of the merchants. "He barely bade me the time of day, and set off on foot for Keelung at such a rate that the Chinese with him had to run to keep up. I never saw the like of him. I wonder that the heat does not kill him."

"It is perfectly marvellous the amount of work he goes through, no matter how exhausting the heat may be," said Mrs. Beauchamp. "No person need ever tell me again that missionaries take easy times."

"Dr. Sinclair, I'm so sorry! I do believe that I have all the wines here beside me, and your glasses are empty. Will you not allow me to pass some to you? Which shall it be, claret or sherry or port?"

It was Miss MacAllister, speaking in so clear a voice that it caught everybody's ear and attracted the notice of all to the fact that, while the wines had frequently circulated around the table, Sinclair's glasses had never been filled. A slight flush, scarcely noticeable under the tan, climbed into visibility above the line which separated the sunburn from the white of the broad forehead. The attention suddenly concentrated on him was evidently unwelcome. But it was with perfect courtesy and good-humour that he replied:

"No apologies are necessary, Miss MacAllister. To do without wine is no privation to me. My glasses are not empty because the wines have not been offered to me."

"Oh! Perhaps you are a teetotaller."

"If you wish to so describe me."

"Really! How interesting! I do not think that I ever met one before."

"Your own glasses have been filled, but, if I am not mistaken, they are yet untasted, Miss MacAllister."

"Oh, yes! That's all very well for a woman. But I mean a man. I am sure that I never before met a man who couldn't enjoy a glass of wine, except some ministers and very immature youths in Bands of Hope."

A laugh went round the table. Sinclair joined in it. But the flush deepened on his forehead.

"My dear," interrupted Mr. MacAllister, "I am afraid that you are forgetting your father. I am practically a total abstainer."

"Oh, I know, father! But then you are an elderly man, and something of a preacher, too. Such virtue is to be expected in you. But Dr. Sinclair is a young man and—a medical doctor. To find such extraordinary rectitude in him is, as the Scotch would say, 'no canny.'"

Again the laugh went round at the doctor's expense. The fair tyrant was getting even with him. Mrs. Thomson, realizing the disadvantage he was at in this verbal passage at arms with a woman, spoke up in her fellow-countryman's behalf:

"You must remember, Miss MacAllister, that different countries have different customs. In your home surroundings it may have been a manly thing to use intoxicants. Where Dr. Sinclair comes from one of the highest standards of manliness is to be a total abstainer."

"And pray tell us where such lofty standards pre-

vail?" asked Carteret. "Where was Dr. Sinclair reared?"

"On a Canadian farm." Sinclair's voice had a defiant ring.

"I shouldn't think that it would be the most up-to-date school of social usages in the world." Carteret's tone was a trifle more insolent than before.

"Perhaps not, Mr. Carteret. But there was one thing we did learn there. We learned——" A biting retort was on his tongue. His eyes met those of the hostess. He paused and softened it. "We learned to give to others the same liberty of opinion as we claimed for ourselves. You claim the liberty to use wine. I do not interfere with your liberty. I claim the liberty to abstain. I expect, Mr. Carteret, the same courtesy in return."

Carteret's face flushed a dark red. He, the son of an English peer, to be taught a lesson in courtesy by the son of a Canadian farmer. Before he had time to frame an answer Mrs. Beauchamp interposed:

"Dr. Sinclair is perfectly right to claim liberty on this question. Our social usages are apt to become tyrannical. I like, every once in a while, to see some one independent enough to revolt against them."

"I am glad to hear you say so, Mrs. Beauchamp," said Commander Gardenier. "I was just beginning to wonder where I came in. I am an abstainer. It is not because I was trained to it from a boy, for I wasn't. Nor is it because of any pledge. It is because of my experience in the navy. I have seen so many of the most promising careers in the service come to nothing, and so many of my seniors go down and out through drink, that I felt it my duty to give

it up. At our mess those who wish to drink even the Queen's health in water are free to do so."

"This discussion must stop right now," broke in the consul, "or, by Jove! every man at the table will be confessing himself a teetotaller, except De Vaux and myself. We shall not forsake the good old ways, shall we, De Vaux?"

"Bless my soul, no, Beauchamp! A little wine for thy stomach's sake," replied De Vaux amidst a burst of laughter, for this was one of the most evident weaknesses of this scion of a noble house. Already his high-pitched voice was noticeably thick.

Then the ladies retired to the drawing-room, leaving the men to their cigars, wine, and black coffee. Miss MacAllister knew that she had made Sinclair uncomfortable for a time. But she had also the consciousness that her little coup had not been so successful as she had intended. Sinclair had come out of the predicament she had contrived for him with rather the better of her. And, curious as it may seem, her feelings were a bit injured.

VII

SPARRING FOR ADVANTAGE

"I THINK we ought to have some music," said Mrs. Beauchamp, as the men rejoined the ladies in the drawing-room. "There is nothing which takes me back home like the old home songs. I believe that there is considerable talent in our company this evening. May we not have some songs?"

"Nothing in the world I like better! 'Pon my soul, there isn't," exclaimed De Vaux, who was talking very freely and was disposed to be gallant towards the ladies. He raised his voice, trembling perhaps with emotion, to a high pitch, and said: "Ladies and gentlemen, permit me to have the honour on your behalf of requesting our hostess to favour us with a song. Bless my soul! I'd rather hear her sing to the accompaniment of her guitar than Patti or Albani, or any other of their prima donnas. 'Pon my honour, I would! . . . Mrs. Beauchamp, will you not accede to our united request and give us the happiness of hearing you?"

He finished with a bow intended to be as profound as those of his Lord Chesterfield days. He seemed unconscious of the limitations imposed on him by the aldermanic proportions which had come to him since his slim and graceful youth.

Mrs. Beauchamp rose with a smile which had more of sadness than of mirth, glanced at her husband, and permitted De Vaux to conduct her to a seat near

the piano and to bring her guitar. The consul sat down at the piano, ran his fingers over the keys, touching soft chords, to which the guitar was brought into tune. Then to the accompaniment of the two instruments Mrs. Beauchamp sang in a voice, not strong, but sweet and sympathetic, a tender old English love song.

"By——! . . . Bless my soul, I mean, it makes me homesick to hear those old songs!" exclaimed De Vaux, amidst the applause. His voice was high and trembling. There was a suspicious redness and moisture in his eyes. "I've been more than twenty years in this forgotten island. But when I hear Mrs. Beauchamp sing such a song as that I protest I want to take the first boat home. 'Pon my honour, I do!"

"Oh, no! You'll not go back to England just yet, De Vaux," said the consul. "We shouldn't know Formosa without you. But I'll tell you what you will do. You'll sing something for us yourself, will you not?"

"Yes, yes, De Vaux!" exclaimed several voices. "Do sing something. Sing 'Rocked in the Cradle of the Deep.'"

"That's De Vaux's Royal George," whispered McLeod to Sinclair. "He always sings that. But he won't sing it yet a while. He'll need a few more drinks first."

"'Pon my soul, it's awfully good of you to ask me! . . . I do not profess to be a singer. Really! I do not. . . . But, since you have been so good as to ask me, I shall do my best, on one condition, that Mrs. Beauchamp will honour me by playing my accompaniment. . . . Mrs. Beauchamp, will you be so kind?" Another bow meant to be profound.

"Certainly, Mr. De Vaux, with pleasure."

In a voice which had once been a sweet tenor, but was now fat and breathless, he sang, "Silver Threads Among the Gold." He had to take a breath in the middle of every long note. As for the high ones, he just touched them. Then his breath failed him, leaving the audience to imagine the rest. But when he was rewarded with a round of applause he responded with an encore, "In the Gloaming." His head was becoming crimson with the effort. Perspiration streamed down his face and neck, in spite of the constant use of his handkerchief. His collar had melted and fallen limply against his coat. The starch of his shirt front had disappeared, leaving it but a crumpled rag.

Some of the guests were insisting on a third number, when the consul came to the rescue:

"This sort of thing mustn't go any further. If my wife and De Vaux continue singing such sentimental songs, they'll have us all homesick. We cannot afford to ship all the English residents of North Formosa by the *Hailoong* to-morrow. Just to change the current of your thoughts, I'll make a break and give you something different."

He took his place at the piano, and to his own accompaniment sang with great spirit, in a strong baritone voice, the old English song, "A Hunting We Will Go."

The applause was as enthusiastic as the spirit in which he had sung, and he was pressed for an encore. The consul replied with mock stage bows, but refused to sing again. He had done his part in chasing away the blue devils of homesickness. Now it was some other body's turn to perform. He knew Miss

MacAllister could sing. Would she not continue the good work and give them something rousing?

Miss MacAllister did not wait to be urged, but responded at once. Her voice was a rich, strong soprano. With a verve and fire worthy of her choice, she sang Lady Nairn's stirring war-song, "The Hundred Pipers." To the insistent demand for another song she replied with "The March of the Cameron Men." With her stately figure at its full height, head thrown back, and eyes which seemed to look away beyond her tropic surroundings to the hills of old Scotland, she sang as if possessed by the spirit of generations of Highland ancestors.

Sinclair, from his place over by the mantel-piece, was looking at her with undisguised admiration.

"Isn't she magnificent? Yon's a prize for some man! . . . Sinclair, man, why don't you go in and win? If you don't try, I'll be ashamed of you, whatever."

It was McLeod. He was speaking in a low tone, only for his friend's ear. But he who had been the personification of coolness during the typhoon was now fairly quivering with excitement. The songs of his people had fired his blood.

"You needn't be ashamed of me, Mac. I'm going to try."

"Good for you! I'll back you to win."

"Don't stake too much on me, Mac. I'm new to this game. You might lose heavily. Carteret is ahead of me."

"That dirty snob!" exclaimed McLeod in a tone of disgust. "He wants her in just the same way as he wants every pretty woman he sees. And then her money would help to repair the Carteret fortunes.

It's an insult to a good woman to mention him in relation to her."

"All the same she and her family are not supposed to know the things that you know against him, whatever they may be. He belongs to a titled family. That counts for a lot with most people who have risen from the ranks. Her mother is greatly taken with him."

"Yes, but the daughter is not."

"I'm not so sure about that."

"I'd stake my life on it. But look, Carteret is going to sing."

It was evident that Carteret had expected to sing, for he had just returned from the cloak-room with a roll of music in his hand. He placed it on the piano, and then turning to Miss MacAllister he conducted her to the instrument with almost an excess of courtesy. Yet his manners were easy and graceful. If at times he seemed to exceed the requirements of etiquette, his ultra politeness accorded well with his Gallic cast of countenance and the cut of beard which he affected.

His voice was a tenor, not very strong, but pure in tone and evidently well-trained. The first selection was "Drink to Me Only with Thine Eyes." It was sung with feeling. The strength of his voice accorded well with the size of the drawing-room, and passion was thrown into the tender lines. As an encore he sang another love song, still more amorous in sentiment and manner.

"His musical talent is Carteret's hope of promotion if he remains in the customs," said Boville, who was one of a little group of guests near to where Sinclair stood. "He thinks that, if he could get the

opportunity to sing before the I.G., he would be promoted to Pekin at once."

"Or better still, if he should succeed in marrying a handsome wife who is musical," said a merchant. "I am told that the I.G. is even more considerate of a subordinate with an accomplished wife than one who possesses the accomplishments himself."

"He has the voice already, and now he seems to be making a bold stroke for the gifted wife," interjected another.

"I shouldn't wish Miss MacAllister any ill," replied Boville. "But I do hope something will happen to take him off my hands. If the I.G. wants him, he will be most welcome to the fellow, so long as I am well quit of him."

Sinclair took no part in the conversation. But he heard every word. The careless references to Miss MacAllister hurt him in a way which surprised himself. The callousness of the suggestion that Carteret should get promotion by marrying her cut him to the quick. How could any one entertain such an idea?

Then he wondered at himself. What was Miss MacAllister to him? A passing stranger, who had taken it into her whimsical head to amuse herself at his expense. Already she had succeeded in making him feel most uncomfortable; indeed, for a time something of a laughing-stock. What need he care? She was nothing to him, and he was nothing to her but the subject of an evening's laughter. What a fool he had been to accept McLeod's challenge! He would have to straighten that out in the morning. Then they both would have shaken off the glamour of that face and figure, and those martial Highland

songs which had so stirred their blood. They would be in their cool senses then. They had not been when the one had made and the other had accepted the challenge.

Meanwhile Miss MacAllister and Carteret were still at the piano. She was slowly turning over some music. He was bending low as if to see it, and perhaps to choose another song. All the while he was speaking to her in a soft voice, and she was making monosyllabic replies. She realized that his head was sinking lower and his face closer to hers. She felt his hot breath on her face and neck and shoulder. It was hot and heavy with wine.

She turned her head slightly but quickly towards him. She saw his eyes fixed greedily on the rich beauties of form only half concealed by her low evening dress. Her face flamed crimson, and she rose hastily from the piano, disregarding his appeal that she should play just one more selection.

As she passed from the instrument to a chair she heard the consul say:

"Sinclair, you're the most confoundedly comfortable-looking duffer I ever saw in a dress suit."

"That's because the tailor who made my suit put side pockets in the trousers," was the reply. "You would be just as comfortable if you had pockets to put your hands in. I have noticed you trying to get them into the seams half a dozen times this evening."

"You're right there. But it's not my fault. I laid it on that tailor in Hong-Kong as a parting injunction to put pockets in my trousers. And he promised. When the suit arrived they had none, and I was five hundred miles too far away to get my hands on him and wring the beast's neck."

"Fortunate for the beast!"

"Yes. But he'll get his punishment yet, that tailor will. He has a lot to answer for. I have sworn outwardly often, and inwardly more times than could be numbered, whenever I have had these clothes on. I envy you. You do look comfortable in that suit. It fits you as if you had been born in it, and with your hands in the trousers' pockets."

Miss MacAllister, looking at Sinclair from the seat she had taken near the French window, agreed with the consul's judgment. The big Canadian was in conventional evening dress, except for one slight concession made to the heat of the climate. Instead of the low-cut vest he wore a broad kamarband of black silk about his waist. The only trace of jewellery was the gold locket on the end of a black leather watch guard, which hung over the kamarband. There was a total absence of dressiness. But as the girl who had been for years familiar with London drawing-rooms looked at the strong, clean-cut features, the massive head with its fair hair contrasting with the black clothing, the lazy grace of the powerful frame leaning against the mantel-piece, she thought to herself that she had never seen a man who had on him more of the marks of being to the manner born. Yet he was the self-confessed son of a Canadian farmer, and reared on a Canadian farm. She found it hard to remain offended with this big, good-looking, good-tempered man.

Involuntarily she compared him again with Carteret, the son of a noble English family. The latter was now talking to Mrs. Beauchamp. She could see that his ordinarily somewhat pallid face was flushed and there was an expression in his eyes which was

not pleasant to see. She thought again of that greedy look and of the hot breath, heavy with wine. She turned her eyes once more towards Sinclair. He was talking to the consul and smiling. The distinction between the two young men took shape in her mind. Sinclair was clean and his smile was frank and pure as that of a child.

She heard the consul saying to him:

"McLeod tells me that you sing."

"McLeod tells a lot of things he knows very little about. I shall have to lay an injunction upon him to hold his peace."

"That's all right for some other time. But for the present you do not deny the charge that you do sing."

"I'll plead guilty to disturbing my neighbours sometimes by singing college songs and such things. But I have none of them here and no music for the accompanist."

"Just what we want; something lively. If there's a chorus, we'll all join in. Give me an idea how it goes and I can chord for you."

Beauchamp ran his fingers over the keys while Sinclair hummed or lilted the tune. Soon the proper chord was struck. Sinclair repeated the words of the chorus till all got them. Then he sang a rollicking college song. When he reached the chorus all joined in, and for the first time the walls of the old Dutch fort and the listening palms and oleanders and magnolias heard the jolly abandon of "The Old Ontario Strand."

When the chorus was reached the second time, Sinclair relinquished the leadership of the air to Miss MacAllister. She took it as if by prearrangement,

while he dropped into his rightful place and supplied the undertone of a bass powerful enough to balance the voices of all the rest of the company.

When it was finished there was an outbreak of applause and even cheers, which showed that all reserve had disappeared and the company were prepared to give themselves up with childish delight to singing. Another college song was sung with the same spirit as the first, and Sinclair was pressed to lead still another.

"I will," he said at last, "if you will allow me to choose one as characteristic of our French Canadian people as those we were favoured with by Miss MacAllister are of the Highland Scotch."

In response to the general consent he sang some verses of—

"En roulant ma boule roulant,
En roulant ma boule,"

and a number of the company joined in the simple refrain. The song which had so often echoed on lake and stream, by the evening campfire, where the paddle dipped, or in the frosty stillness of the snow-laden forests of the north rang out through the scented darkness of the warm tropic night.

A number of other songs were rendered by different members of the party. Then Sinclair was called for again.

"I am afraid that my repertoire has come very near the point of being exhausted," he said. "I have only those songs the words of which I can remember, and the selection is not very choice."

This time it was a plaintive negro melody of the Sunny South. Again Miss MacAllister found herself singing heartily with the rest in the refrain,

and after the first verse leading the chorus while Sinclair sang bass. When the song was done she suddenly said to herself:

"What a silly I am making of myself! I came in here determined to get even with that doctor. And here I am singing with him and for him like a sissy in a Sunday-school concert. He can do his own singing from now on. I'll pay him back yet."

The rest were urging Sinclair to sing again, when Miss MacAllister said:

"Dr. Sinclair has shown wonderful versatility in his choice of songs this evening. English, French, negro, he sings them all with equal facility. I wonder if he would not favour us with a Canadian Indian song. I have never heard any of their music. I should so love to have the opportunity. Will you not sing us one, Dr. Sinclair?"

Her face wore an expression of childlike innocence and interest. But McLeod thought he saw a mischievous gleam in her eyes. Mr. MacAllister looked at his daughter with a puzzled face and shook his head a little. The consul eyed her doubtfully, as though trying to fathom the purpose behind this request. He saw nothing but the appearance of almost infantile guilelessness. Then he heard Sinclair saying:

"Certainly, Miss MacAllister. I am happy to do anything in my power to serve you. Only it is a little hard on Mr. Beauchamp to ask him even to chord to a type of music he may never have heard before."

"Thank you so much, Dr. Sinclair. I am all anxiety to hear you."

Then she added:

"I am sure Mr. Beauchamp will be able to accompany you. He is a man of infinite resource in music." For she was afraid that Sinclair's concern about placing the consul in a difficult position was only an attempt to provide a loop-hole for his own escape.

A buzz of conversation broke out in the room while Sinclair bent over the instrument, softly humming a slow, stately measure, and the consul's fingers felt for the harmonious chords. Soon the voice and the chords were moving together in harmony.

"That may be an Indian tune," said Beauchamp, "but it sounds remarkably like certain bars from an old sixteenth-century mass I had to practise when a boy until my fingers were nearly worn out."

"Perhaps the Indians learned it from the early Roman Catholic missionaries," was the quick reply. "In any case, I fancy it is the sound of the language Miss MacAllister wishes to hear rather than the music."

"If you like, I shall play the tune for you. I remember it perfectly."

"Thank you, I prefer the chords."

Sinclair straightened himself, and the buzz of conversation instantly ceased. Then his voice rolled forth to the slow, solemn air, words as melodious as the notes of the music. At their first sound the consul's head ducked below the level of the piano, which hid him from most in the room. Sinclair gave him a vicious dig in the ribs, but sang on without the quiver of an eyelid. The full vowel sounds of the unknown language brought out to perfection the tones of his rich bass voice.

His eyes glanced around the room. All were listening intently, and all, save Commander Gardenier,

had their eyes on him. He thought that he could detect a grim smile on the naval officer's averted face. Miss MacAllister had a keen look—was it a suspicious look?—in her eyes.

Under cover of the applause which followed the consul turned on him:

"You have the nerve to pass a chorus from a Greek tragedy on a company like this for a Red Indian war-song."

"I plead guilty," replied Sinclair. "But I had to do something or be again held up to ridicule as I was at dinner. I thought that you were the only one likely to recognize it and I knew that you would not betray me."

"I acknowledge that you had to do something. For some reason Miss MacAllister seems bound to make game of you. She deserves what you have given her, and I'll not give you away. But it was nervy just the same." And the consul laughed indulgently as he turned away.

Miss MacAllister did not join in the general applause. But when it was done she said gravely:

"Thank you, Dr. Sinclair, for gratifying my whim to hear a song in the Indian language. I had no idea that it would be so beautiful. Thank you very much."

Sinclair's face flushed as he replied:

"I am only too glad to have been able to do anything which has pleased you." At the same moment he felt a pang of remorse for the deception.

He had not long to think of it when he heard Mrs. MacAllister saying to Commander Gardenier:

"What a barbarous jargon to be called a language!"

"Yes," replied the officer drily, "but I have heard a good many others more barbarous."

Then Thomson, the missionary, remarked in his slow way:

"It—some—way—seems—to—me—that—I—have—heard—some—thing—like—that—before."

Sinclair had to act quickly:

"You were a missionary once among the Indians of Bruce Peninsula, were you not?"

"Yes—I—was."

"You probably heard it there."

"Well—perhaps—I—did."

Some of the guests rose to depart, and their hostess rose with them. Before they had time to begin to say farewell, Carteret said loudly enough to be heard by all in the room:

"Mrs. Beauchamp, before we go, may we not hear Mr. De Vaux sing again? I know that we should all be delighted to hear him."

"I am afraid that we are imposing on Mr. De Vaux," replied the hostess, who realized the condition De Vaux ordinarily reached by that hour after a dinner. "I think that he is tired. He has done his part so well this evening that it seems unfair to ask him for any more."

"I am sure, Mrs. Beauchamp, that Mr. De Vaux will not feel it a hardship to sing again. He is our foremost vocalist in Formosa. We want him to uphold the honour of the local talent. Mr. De Vaux, will you not sing for us 'Rocked in the Cradle of the Deep'?"

"Lord! . . . Mr. Carteret—ladies and gentlemen—how good of you to ask me! . . . By——! . . . Bless my soul, I mean! . . . It is good of you. . . .

I'm afraid. . . . I'm not in very good voice. But since you insist—I'll try. . . . By——! . . . I mean 'pon my honour, I shall!"

"Shall I play your accompaniment, De Vaux?" said the consul, in response to an appealing look from his wife.

"How good of you, Beauchamp! . . . By——! . . . 'Pon my soul, I mean—it is!"

Purple-faced, perspiring, steadying himself by the piano, The Honourable Lionel Percival Dudley De Vaux sang, in a series of high-toned asthmatic gasps, "Rocked in the Cradle of the Deep."

Then the guests said their farewells and, preceded by natives carrying lanterns, they began to move off into the warm aromatic darkness of the southern night.

VIII

SINCLAIR'S OPPORTUNITY

SINCLAIR and McLeod were awaiting their opportunity to say good-night when one of the consul's Chinese servants hastily entered and handed his master a letter:

"One boy b'long Kai Bok-su come Keelung side, one piecee chit new sick-boy-man can catchee."

"All right, boy," replied the consul. "Dr. Sinclair, here's a letter for you from Dr. MacKay."

The doctor cut the letter open and read:

"CHINESE CAMP, LOAN-LOAN, NEAR KEELUNG,
"Aug. 5th, 1884.

"DEAR DR. SINCLAIR:

"As you are aware, a battle is raging. A number of the Chinese have been killed. Many more are wounded. The end is not yet. They have no doctors but native fakirs. They have no medicines, no instruments, no knowledge of surgery. There is dreadful suffering. Will you help? Never a better opportunity to serve humanity and win the Chinese.

"The consul will give you passports. The bearer of this will guide you. A Hoa will come with you as far as Taipeh and secure a permit from the governor. Mrs. MacKay and Dr. Bergmann will give you a free hand with the Mission's stock of medicines, and will help you to pack them. Will you come?

"Yours,
"G. L. MACKAY."

Without a word Sinclair handed the open letter to the consul, who had now bidden farewell to the rest of the guests. He read it quickly and looked up:

"You are going?"

"Yes."

"When?"

"First launch in the morning."

"Good! I'll have your papers ready."

"Thank you, Mr. Beauchamp. Good-night."

"I'll send the constable over to MacKay's with the papers. Take care of yourself. Good-night, doctor. Good-night, McLeod."

. . . . . .

The first faint rose of dawn was showing in the sky behind the great bulk of the Taitoon Mountains when Sinclair stepped out on the broad verandah of the missionary's bungalow, ready for his journey. The Chinese student who was to guide him was already there. A coolie bearing two round baskets containing the medicines, instruments, and other necessaries, balanced on the end of his long bamboo carrying pole, came round the corner of the house.

The iron gate at the foot of the garden clicked sharply. A vigorous step sounded on the gravelled walk. An erect, soldierly figure stepped out of the darkness into the light streaming from the doorway, rapped his heels together, saluted, and handed Dr. Sinclair a packet of letters.

"Good-morning, Sergeant Gorman. You're sharp on time."

"No credit to me, sir! It's the consul, sir! The divil himself wud have to get up in the morning before he went to bed at night to catch the consul late."

There was no mistaking Sergeant Gorman's native land. Sinclair laughed as he said:

"I suppose these are my passports."

"Right you are, sir! But wud you moind lookin'

at the last one furst, for, widout anny conceit in meself, it's the most important of thim all."

Sinclair opened it and read:

"H. B. M. Consulate, Tamsui, Aug. 6th, 1884.

"Dear Dr. Sinclair:

"I am presuming on your good nature to make a request of you. Will you accept of Sergeant Gorman's assistance in your volunteer Red Cross Service? Ever since the cannon fire began yesterday morning, he has been aching to get into the field of action. Your going is an opportunity. He will not be an encumbrance. He has been at various times surgeon's assistant and hospital sergeant. He speaks pidgin, and knows quite a bit of vernacular. Commander Gardenier will spare me a man to take his place. Feeling sure that you will grant my request as soon as you read it, I have enclosed his passports with yours.

"Wishing you a safe and speedy return, I am,

"Your obedient servant,

"H. R. L. Beauchamp."

Sinclair read between the lines. It was not merely the desire to gratify Sergeant Gorman's passion to be in any fighting which might be handy which had actuated the consul. It was solicitude for himself. He was a stranger in the island. He did not know the language. He had never been nearer war than the annual camp of a brigade of Canadian militia. This resourceful Irishman, with more than twenty years of varied service, mostly in the Orient and among Oriental peoples, would simply be invaluable to him. The consul had been up all night arranging for his convenience and safety. More to himself than to any one else he exclaimed:

"Beauchamp's a trump!"

"An' the right bower at that!" interjected Gorman.

Sinclair dashed into MacKay's study, scribbled off a hasty note of thanks, and was out again before the sergeant had finished congratulating himself on his good fortune.

"We must be off. There goes the launch's whistle," said Sinclair, as he swung off with his long, powerful strides, which put Gorman to his best gait and made the natives drop into their peculiar little jogging trot.

Although the day had scarcely broken when they left the house, and it was but a few hundred yards down the steep hill to the beach, the impatient sun of the South had already sprung into the heavens when they reached the little jetty at which the launch lay. A Hoa, the chief Chinese assistant of Dr. MacKay, and McLeod were already there.

"Hallo, Mac!" exclaimed the doctor. "I thought you would be sleeping yet. It's more than decent of you to turn out so early to see me off."

"I am going with you as far as Twatutia," replied McLeod. "The Chinese are so excited over this war that they have not forwarded part of our cargo. I am going up to see what persuasives I can apply to the compradore. We have to sail by this afternoon's tide and want to take a full cargo. We may not get another chance for a while."

"I certainly am in luck this morning," said Sinclair. "You to keep me company as far as Twatutia; A Hoa to get my passports viséd, and Sergeant Gorman to act as my bodyguard and be generally responsible for my safety and good conduct."

By this time the two friends and the Chinese preacher had found for themselves as comfortable positions as possible under the awning which covered the decks of the little launch and sheltered them from the rays of the sun.

The launch was threading its way through a fleet of junks which were hasting to get out to sea with

the ebbing tide. Some had already hoisted their huge, brown, bat-wing sails and turned their watchful eyes towards the open sea. Some were just lifting their anchors, while priests from the neighbouring temple rowed around them in boats with beating drums and droning pipes, to frighten away the demons, propitiate the goddess of the sea, secure for the sailors a prosperous voyage, undisturbed by the French, and incidentally to get for themselves and their temple a substantial contribution. Some had not yet finished taking cargo, and their crews were working with feverish haste to get loaded in time not to miss the last of the ebb. From them all came the ceaseless shrill, nasal shouting of the Chinese seamen as they pulled at the ropes, or heaved up the anchor or hauled away at the tackle hoisting their cargo on board.

It was all intensely interesting to Sinclair, who never wearied of studying human life, especially when it presented types and phases which were new and strange to him. But he was not so much interested in the Chinese as to fail to notice the large house, with its cool-looking upper and lower verandahs, looking out on the river, in which the MacAllisters were quartered. He wondered if the maiden who had teased him so were awake and plotting some new mischief to make him or some one else uncomfortable. Or was she sleeping as peacefully as if she had never done a naughty deed in all her bright young life? It was with a start, as if a guilty secret had been discovered, that he heard McLeod's voice saying:

"I suppose your Highland girl is having her beauty sleep. I never saw any one who to my mind needed it less."

Sinclair was annoyed that McLeod so often seemed

to read his thoughts. It was a little tartly that he replied:

"Are you still harping at that? If I were a suitor for that young lady's hand, I should have to look upon you as a rival, you seem so smitten with her."

"Not the slightest danger, Doc. The fact that a fellow admires a girl's looks or style doesn't necessarily mean that he has fallen in love with her. Oh, no! I have my own dreams of a trip I hope to make next year to Prince Edward Island, and if I come back to the China Coast I'll not come back alone. That's good enough for me. I admire Miss MacAllister. I think she's splendid. But falling in love with her! Not the slightest notion! Any interest I have in her is on your account."

"I'm sorry, Mac. I shouldn't have said what I did. I knew that you were as true as steel."

"It's all right, doctor. I've been jollying you too much. And the way she acts sometimes makes it a little hard to bear. But you'll win out in the end."

"I do not know about that," said Sinclair, somewhat gloomily. "The way she treated me last night did not look much like it."

"Never mind that. She would not treat you like that if she were not taking more interest in you than in any one else at present. She doesn't know just what is the matter with herself. That is the way she is taking to work it off. She'll change after a bit."

"I'll yield to your superior knowledge of the ways of women," said the doctor, with a laugh which had but little mirth in it. "It may be all right. Just the same, it doesn't look good to me. . . . Here comes Sergeant Gorman. I had better see my pass-

ports, and get him to instruct A Hoa what is to be done when we get to Taipeh."

Opening the packet, he found copies of passports in English, French, and Chinese. One addressed to the French Commander read:

"Her Britannic Majesty's Consulate,
"Tamsui, August 6th, 1884.

"To the Officer in Chief Command of the French Forces at Keelung:

"The bearer of this paper, Doctor Donald Sinclair, a British subject, has volunteered his services as a medical doctor to the sick and wounded of the Chinese army, at present engaged before Keelung. He will observe strict neutrality, and will be equally ready to perform humane offices and render skilled medical and surgical assistance to any of the French troops, should circumstances bring that within his power. Wherefore I, the undersigned consul for Great Britain at Tamsui, do beg the Officer in Command of the French Forces at Keelung, to accord to the said Doctor Donald Sinclair protection and liberty to perform his offices of mercy, in accordance with the terms of the Geneva Convention. He will be accompanied by one European assistant, likewise a British subject, Sergeant John Gorman, and by one or more Chinese assistants, all wearing the badge of the Red Cross.

"H. R. L. Beauchamp,
"Her Britannic Majesty's Consul."

Passports of a similar tenor were addressed to the Chinese authorities.

"Sergeant Gorman, you know Chinese. Tell A Hoa what we want him to do when we get to Taipeh. He is to get these viséd and, if possible, to get a special permit from the governor. It will carry more weight than the passports."

"Very good, sir! I'll make him understand."

Sergeant Gorman's mastery of the language was not perfect. But the Chinese preacher required little instruction. He knew better than either Sinclair or the sergeant what should be done. Before becoming a Christian he had been private secretary to a

mandarin in an official position at Pekin. He had travelled much on the mainland as well as in Formosa, and was well acquainted with official procedure both in peace and in war. Scarcely had Sergeant Gorman begun his explanations when his "Ho! . . . Ho! . . . An-ni ho! . . . Put-tsi ho!" (Good! good! That's good! Very good!) showed that he fully understood what was expected of him.

IX

A QUIET LIFE

MEANWHILE McLeod and Sinclair were studying the sergeant. He was a man of perhaps forty-five years, but could pass for much younger. Five feet eight or nine inches in height, he was broad-shouldered and sturdily built. No matter where he might be or how dressed, there could be no mistaking that he had been a soldier. Long military training spoke in every movement.

His thick hair was a red-brown, with the emphasis on the red. So was his heavy, fierce-looking moustache. So were his bristling eyebrows. So were his eyes. His face, save where it was ordinarily covered by the band of his sun-helmet, was pretty nearly the same shade.

He talked rapidly; very rapidly; so rapidly that his words often stumbled over one another in their eagerness to get out, until he actually stuttered. When he tried, he spoke English with just enough Irish accent to make it sweet on his tongue. But when he didn't try, and that was most of the time, the brogue was rich and thick. Nearly always he had the peculiarly Irish trick of repeating the last words of a closing sentence.

"How long has Gorman been here?" asked Sinclair in a low tone.

"Only a couple of months," replied McLeod. "Came over with us from Amoy."

"How does it come that a sergeant with his record of service should end up by being consulate constable in an out-of-the-way corner like Tamsui?"

"Search me! I can't tell you."

"Probably the old story of a man who has served his Queen and country well and then been dropped, to live or die wherever he may chance to fall."

"Yes, and none of the blockheads who have commanded him have sense enough to know how much good service they could get out of a man like that, if they would only give him a chance to rise. Instead they turn him adrift like a worn-out horse."

"Perhaps he has a history behind him. It seems to me that most men out here, except you and I, Mac, have histories. Here he comes. Perhaps he will talk."

The sergeant crossed the little deck, stood at attention, and saluted:

"I have the honour to report, sir, that I have given the Chinese, A Hoa, the instructions you commanded and that he seems to understand them very well, sir."

"Very good, sergeant. There is nothing further to be done until we reach Twatutia. Be seated."

"Thank you, sir."

"By the way, sergeant, I notice by the passport that your name is John Gorman."

"It is, sir."

"I used to know a Sergeant John Gorman on the police force in Kingston, Canada. They say that, when the college boys were out on a frolic and raising cain, he could do more to keep them within bounds with a smile and a bit of blarney than all the rest of the force could do with their batons."

"Och, but he'll be from Sleeahtballymackcur-

raghalicky, in County Cork. All the people there are Gormans, an' most of thim are John Gormans. An' as for the shmile, all the Gormans have it. They get it whin they're childer, sayin' the name of their native place. An' whin they grow up, no matther where they go, the shmile wan't come off—the divil a bit will it come off."

"You're right there, sergeant," said McLeod. "You have the smile, sure enough. But it never shows to best advantage until you say the name of the place where you were born. What's this it is, again?"

"Sleeahtballymackcurraghalicky."

"Exactly! That's a name to make any one smile."

"Och, Misther McLeod, but you shud have seen it on me whin I furst left the ould place. Me face was all shmile. But on the Afghan border wan day, an ould black-face of a Pathan—may the divil fly away wid him!—tuk a pot shot at me from betune two rocks. He got me through the two cheeks of me, an' siv'ral of me teeth. After the wounds healed up I never had me natural shmile ag'in,—wud you be-l'ave me, I niver was able to shmile natural ag'in."

"Did you get back at him at all?" inquired McLeod.

"That's jist what was hurtin' me. For while I was spittin' out me teeth, an' in no condishun to take aim, the onderhanded, tricherous Afghan was dodgin' away through the rocks. But me next in file in the Munsters, he was a Scotchman from Aberdeen, got a squint of him as he bint double, goin' round the corner of a pricipice, an' be the blissin' of Hiven, took a chip off the stern works of him,—a mortial good shot, for the target he hit was the only part in sight."

"But how did you know that he was hit?" asked McLeod. "Did you take him prisoner?"

"Divil a bit! A wounded Pathan can crawl loike a wounded snake. But eighteen months afterwards I was up in the hills, wan of an escort of the p'ace envoys. The very first day wan of the native policemen pointed out an ould black-face among the chiefs an' tould me that was the man that put the bullet through me two cheeks. An' be the powers, that ould haythen cud no more sit down than I cud shmile. The shot of me next in file had spoiled the joint in the middle of him. It was the furst rale comfort that had come to me since the day I was shot. I began to laugh whin I saw him shtandin' up shtiff as a ramrod whin the others sat; or lyin' on his back, shtraight as a yard-shtick whin the rest were reclinin'-loike on the divans. The more I thought of it, the more I laughed, an' the shmile of the Gormans began to come back to me little by little. But I'll niver have the shmile ag'in that I had in Sleeahtballymackcurraghalicky—sure as I'm livin', I'll niver shmile ag'in as I used to whin I left Sleeahtballymackcurraghalicky."

"How did you come to leave Sleeahtballymack-what-a-ghalicky?" inquired Sinclair.

"Shure, docther, an' it wasn't me own doin'. To the best of me ricolliction it was the doin' of Providence, wid a bit of help from the priests, an' me father, an' the government, an' the recruitin' sergeant thrown in."

"How did they all come to the help of Providence?" asked the doctor.

"Faix, but you're of an inquirin' turn of moind, docther; beggin' your pardon for makin' so bould as to tell you that same."

"It's all right, sergeant. Go on."

"Well, docther, to make a long story short, it began this way. Me father was an indepindint farmer, wid a bit of land right forninst the dure of the church at Sleeahtballymackcurraghalicky, an' a hundred pounds in a bank in Cork. He was gittin' on in years. Me mother was dead, an' I was the only choild. What does me father do but ups an' wills his land to the Church for masses, me to be a priest, an' the money to the college that was to educate me. You'll onderstand that the land an' the money were not to be paid over till me father was dead an' done wid thim, d'ye see? But I was to go to school at wanst to be trained for a priest, d'ye onderstand?"

"Yes, I see the plan."

"Well, widout even so much as sayin' 'by your l'ave,' they packed me off to the Classical School in Skibbereen, to learn Latin an' the other dead-an'-gone languages. To make a long story short, it didn't agree wid me, an' I didn't agree wid it. It wasn't the languages. I cud get thim all right. It was this business of bein' a priest. Moind ye, I'm not sayin' annything ag'in the Church. I was born a Catholic, an' I'll die a Catholic. But bein' a priest wint ag'in me grain. To repeat ould dead prayers for dead people, in dead languages, which nobody prisint but the blissed Lord Himself cud onderstand, an' He tired of hearin' thim centuries before you were born; to hear ould wives confessin' their sins which they shudn't tell to anny man, barrin' another ould wife loike thimselves; to live on the fat of the land while the Paddies an' Dinnies an' Mickies were livin' on pitaties an' salt, wid now an' ag'in a taste of butther-

milk—it didn't seem to me givin' value for the money received.

"An' thin I was gettin' to be a bit of a gossoon, an' sometoimes I was afther thinkin' of me farm at Sleeahtballymackcurraghalicky, which wasn't moine ayther, for it was willed to the Church. They often tould me that whin I was a priest I wud have no use for the farm. They said that a half-acre of purgatory was worth more to a priest than the best two-hundred-acre farm in County Cork. But they all had their well-cultivated garden plots in purgatory, an' bedad but they wanted me farm as well—d'ye moind. They were afther me farm in County Cork as well.

"Not to be wearyin' you wid the details of me autybiography, the longer I was at it the less I loiked it, an' the more I had differences of opinion wid the priests of the college, 'speshully wid the wan they called the Prefect of Discipline, which is the polite name for the Wallopin' Masther. Jist as I was gettin' tired of the b'atin's, an' was thinkin' of runnin' away an' joinin' the navy for the sake of a quiet loife, the English Government came to the assistance of Providence, an' betune the two they got me out of bein' a priest—thanks to the government an' the Hivenly Lord, I got out of bein' a priest."

"How in the world did the government come to interfere with your course in the college?" inquired Sinclair.

"The government did not interfere directly, as you moight say. It didn't make what you moight call a frontal attack. It jist made a kind of divarshun in the rear. It appointed me father a Jay Pay."

"A Jay Pay!" exclaimed McLeod. "What kind of a pay is that?"

"Why, Misther McLeod, it's a Jay Pay, jist. A Justice of the P'ace for the District of West Cork."

"Oh, I understand!"

"Yes, sir! It appointed me father a Jay Pay for West Cork. An', docther, did you ever hear of annything foolisher in your loife? To appoint a man a Jay Pay who was sixty-foive years ould, foive fut two inches high, weighed only seven stone, and had never learned how to use the two hands of him or the proper twisht to give a blackthorn? Wud you tell me now, fwhat was the use of makin' a Justice of the P'ace in West Cork out of a little ould man who cud naythe use his hands nor twirl a shillelagh?"

"It does appear unreasonable."

"Onreasonable? Begorra, it was wurrse than that. There was no sinse to it. An' anny man that knows West Cork will tell you the same. But the ways of the governmint are loike the ways of Providence, past foinding out. Anny way, it meant that me course for the priesthood was brought to a speedy conclushun."

"How?"

"Well, it was this way. Me father was appointed a Jay Pay, wid headquarters at Bantry. The very furst case he troied was wan of assault committed by Micky Murphy on Paddy O'Leary whin he was seein' Biddy O'Hea home afther mass. They were pretty well matched, and wan got as much damage as the other. So me father jist bound both of thim over to kape the p'ace. Wud you belave me, just to show th'ir contimpt for the law an' for a little ould man loike that bein' made a Jay Pay, by common consint they fought it out forninst the very dure of his court, while the local consthables held their coats an' Biddy O'Hea was referee.

"Thin was me chanst. Before that me father wud hear nothin' for me but bein' a priest. Now he appointed me a speshull consthable. He wanted me to go to Dublin an' take some lessons wid me hands an' wid a shtick from a profissor of the science. I tould him that it was quite unnecessary. Anny likely gossoon of eighteen or nineteen who had spint three years contindin' wid the Wallopin' Masther of that school in Skibbereen had all the science he was likely to need as a speshull consthable. An' be the powers, me father had no reason to repint of his choice. There was no more contimpt shown for the law whin he held court—shure as the saints are in hiven, niver a wan showed anny more contimpt of court in West Court, but he was sorry for the day he was born.

"Not to be wearyin' you wid particulars, this wint along for about three years. Thin me father got too feeble to do the wurrk, an' the governmint appointed an associate Jay Pay. That was the ind of me service as a speshull consthable. The new Jay Pay stood six fut three, an' weighed two hundred an' fifty pounds. I was out of a job.

"But there was no lack of divarshun. From Mullaghareirk to Ballingurreen, from Clonakilty to Ballydehob, from Musheramore to Teampeall-na-bo'ct, every Rory of the Hills that had iver been in me father's court, or iver had a relation there, was lyin' for me wid his shillelagh, an' sometimes an ould rusty fowlin'-piece. It wasn't healthy for me in West Cork anny more. The priests cud have made it safe enough. But I had wanst studied to be a priest, an' had contínded wid the Prefect of Discipline, d'ye see? An' thin there was the hundred pounds in the bank in Cork, an' the farm forninst the dure of the church

in Sleeahtballymackcurraghalicky, d'ye moind? They wud be surer if I was out of the way. So, for the sake of a quiet loife, I tuk the Queen's shillin' an' went away to the wars—God pardon me if I'm not speakin' the truth, it was for a quiet loife I left West Cork, an' was shipped out wid the Munsters to the wars in Indy."

"Did you ever see your father again?"

"Niver! He doied a twelvemonth after I left for Indy."

"Have you ever been back to see the old place where you were born?"

"Wanst. Tin years afther I enlisted, I got l'ave an' wint back from Indy."

"And the farm——?"

"It was still there. They hadn't moved it."

"Who had it?"

"The priests."

"Was the money still in the bank in Cork?"

"Divil a bit!"

"Did you inquire?"

"I did."

"What did they tell you?"

"They tould me that they had expinded the hundred pounds, an' the value of the farm, an' a little more in masses an' prayers to get me father out of purgatory. They said that I was a bit in their debt, an' that they would need a trifle yet, for they hadn't got him quite free. I asked thim if that was God's truth they were speakin'. They tould me that it was. 'Thin,' says I, 'if you know so much of what's goin' on in purgatory, wud you jist give me father a message from me? Jist tell him to ask the Blissed Lord to open the dure and let him out,

an' I'll stake me sowl's salvation on it that the Lord will do it at wanst, and niver ask him for a farm or a hundred pounds in the bank. For me father was a man that niver willingly hurted a chicken.' An' wid that I left them wid me farm an' the hundred pounds. But it's many a cintury me father will be restin' on the beds of flowers in glory before the fires of purgatory will have burned that farm an' the hundred pounds out of the sowls of the black dragoons who defrauded me of me inheritance. An' that's God's truth I'm tellin' you. An' moind ye, it's a Catholic I was born and a Catholic I intind to die."

For a time the three white men sat in silence, each busy with his own thoughts. The broad river streamed past them, gleaming in the sun, bearing its fleet of fishing boats and market boats and here and there a cargo boat, with big mat sails, dropping down with the current and tide, laden with tea or sugar or camphor or coal. The low green shores were quick with the life of a dense population. Beyond these the blue and purple hills rose and stretched away in wavy lines of colour till the far-off lofty peaks blended with the sky.

Dr. Sinclair turned from the natural scenery to look again at the Irish soldier who was to be his companion in the new and unaccustomed scenes which lay before him. Sergeant Gorman was looking out over river and plain and mountain. But his eyes were those of one who did not see. There was a far-away look in them. Dreams slept in their red-brown depths. He interested Sinclair strangely. He was a rare specimen in the doctor's field of research, human kind. He wanted to know more of him.

"You have put in most of your service in the Far East, Sergeant Gorman?" he said.

"I have, sir. All except two years spint at the Cape."

"Mostly in India?"

"Mostly, wid spells at Aden and in Burmah. Thin I was sint to Hong-Kong, where I picked up the pidgin. I put in my last years of service in the Straits, where I learned a bit of the lingo spoken here. At the Straits all the wurrk is done by Chinese from Amoy, the same people as these in Formosa. Thin, as there was nothing for a time-expired soldier to do, an' the climate was too hot for the wife an' childer, I came north to Amoy an' tuk service ag'in wid some more has-beens, to guard the consulate an' do a bit of police wurrk in the Settlement durin' the trouble wid the French. But, begorra, it was out of the fryin'-pan into the fire."

"How was that?"

"Me mother-in-law came to live wid us."

"That was hard lines," said McLeod sympathetically.

"Faith, an' if you'd known her you'd say that from the heart."

"How long did you stand it?"

"Six weeks."

"And then——?"

"Thin I heard that the French were beloike to kick up a shindy in Formosa. So for the sake of a quiet loife I exchanged to Tamsui. An' here I am off to the wars ag'in an' enjoyin' p'ace an' happiness—by the blissin' of Hiven, enjoyin' p'ace an' happiness."

X

GLORIOUS WAR

THE launch had reached the landing-place at Twatutia. The little party stepped ashore. A parting grasp of the hand from McLeod, and Dr. Sinclair, Sergeant Gorman, A Hoa and the student guide stepped into chairs, to be borne to the governor's yamen in the adjoining walled city of Taipeh.

The governor was not at home. He had already left for Keelung to take personal charge of the defences. But the deputy he had left in Taipeh seemed to have imbibed some of the active and progressive spirit of Liu Ming-chuan. He read a Chinese copy of the passports, listened carefully to A Hoa's courteous and polished explanations, affixed the official seals, and wrote a brief order to all officials, civil and military, to extend all courtesy and afford every assistance to the distinguished foreigners who were volunteering their services to the Chinese forces. There were none of the old-time red-tape evasions and delays of Chinese officialdom. He was another of the pioneers of a new China.

A Hoa returned to Tamsui, having fulfilled his commission. The rest pushed on towards the camp at Loan-Loan.

Before they left the city they met in the streets many natives who were plainly refugees from Keelung

and the vicinity. Once outside the walls, they saw the narrow road as it wound and zigzagged through the rice-fields, dotted with town and country people, hurrying as best they could towards the capital for safety. The farther they advanced the denser grew the stream of fugitives.

The rice-fields were left behind with the plain near Taipeh. The road began to pass through a more and more mountainous region. It grew narrower and narrower, until it was a mere foot-path, sometimes threading the bottom of a ravine and sometimes clinging precariously to the face of a hill which was almost a precipice; now dropping down to the very margin of the river or fording a tributary stream, and now far up on a mountain side. And all the way, like a huge, writhing, variegated snake, appearing on the hillsides and open spaces, disappearing in the ravines, in the long grass or groves of bamboos, that endless line of refugees wound its slow length along.

It is about twenty miles from Taipeh to Keelung. After the first ten miles the throng of fugitives became so dense that it was very difficult for the chairs to proceed. Honest fathers of families laden with all they could carry of their poor household possessions; rascally banditti and sneak thieves taking advantage of the general disorder and distress to loot their neighbours' deserted houses, and even to snatch from the hands or shoulders of the defenceless the few valuables they were trying to save; women hobbling along on their little feet with infants strapped to their backs, and older children, whom they were ill-able to help, clinging to their hands; maidens terror-stricken by the tales of the imaginary atrocities of the foreign devils, and scarcely less afraid of the real atrocities of their

own rascally fellow-countrymen, especially of many of the braves from the mainland.

At long intervals a sedan-chair pressed its way through the throng, bearing a sick or wounded officer back to the capital. Wounded regulars in white or red or maroon tunics and straw hats limped along, adding a touch of colour to the writhing serpent. Irregular levies in the ordinary dark-blue cotton clothing of the Chinese coolies were hastening home, glad of the success of the French attack, so that they might get an opportunity to desert with their arms and all the loot they could lay their hands upon.

The flight had its comedies and its tragedies. But the comedies only played lightly over the surface of the general tragedy. A coolie jogged along with two huge baskets swinging from the ends of the bamboo carrying-pole. In one were a small pig and a number of live ducks and hens. Balancing these in the other basket were his two children.

Some farmers, making an effort to save their livestock, drove a number of pigs and a herd of water-buffaloes into the midst of the long line of refugees. But frightened by the yells and execrations, pounded with staffs and bamboo yokes, and jabbed by the knives, spears, and bayonets of the soldiers, they stampeded along the narrow way through the midst of the procession. The pigs, running between the feet of the weary plodders, upset many. But the buffaloes, with their huge bulk and enormous horns, flung them right and left and trampled some to death, till their mad rush turned off at an angle from the road being followed. Over all rose a continual clamour of shrill, high-pitched voices—talking, scolding, cursing, crying, screaming hysterically.

One old woman with white hair, hobbling painfully along with the aid of a staff, stopped again and again, saying that she could go no farther. Each time her son, who was laden with the most precious of his household goods, reasoned with her, pled with and adjured her to try again. He was backed by all the members of the family. After much shrill altercation, she would make another attempt and struggle along a short distance. At last she stopped, sat down by the wayside, and, in spite of all they could do, refused to budge an inch. Her poor little bound feet could carry her no farther. Seeing that persuasion was in vain, the son put down his load of valuables. He looked hesitatingly from his mother to his poor possessions, and from them back to his mother again. Filial piety prevailed, and crouching down he lifted his mother on his back and trudged on, leaving his chattels by the way. He had not gone a hundred feet when there was not an article left. But there were other old and feeble, other women and children, who had none to carry them. They were left beside the road to live or die.

A man dressed in a long gown of mauve silk, evidently a prosperous merchant, was trudging along, followed closely by his wife, a couple of young maidens, evidently daughters, and some younger children. One of the bandits who had been enrolled as soldiers and had deserted was hurrying past. Like a flash he snatched at a cord he saw around the merchant's neck, jerked a bag of money from within his clothes, and with a tug which well-nigh strangled him wrenched it away. Recovering himself a little, the merchant, with a scream of anger, struck the robber over the head with his staff. Instantly the ruffian levelled his gun

and blew out his victim's brains, in the midst of the shrieking women of his household. Then, darting into the long grass and bamboos, he made his escape. There was none to avenge. There were none save the weeping women to care. Fear and the instinct of self-preservation made them all brutes. The throng pressed blindly on, trampling the still quivering body of the murdered man under their feet.

There were many more women and children in the flight than men. It was not merely because some of the men had willingly taken service against the enemy, and others had been impressed. In many cases it was because the husbands and fathers had fled first and left their wives and children to fare as best they could. Love plays so small a part in Chinese home life that there was little bond to bind husbands to wives. A wife is purchased in much the same way as any other domestic animal. When it came to a choice between his individual safety by unencumbered flight and incurring some risk by waiting to save his wife, many a Chinese husband unhesitatingly chose the former. The women of such families had to seek safety as best they could. Great numbers of them were among the fugitives.

These defenceless women were the special prey of the irregular levies, deserters, and banditti, who were everywhere searching for loot and committing deeds of violence. Taking advantage of the crowding and confusion caused by the passing of Sinclair's chair at a narrow part of the road, one scoundrel snatched some jewellery from several unprotected women, twisted bracelets from their arms, and even twitched earrings from their bleeding ears. It was right in front of Sergeant Gorman's chair. Then the robber

sprang past the chair on the side next the mountain in his attempt to escape. He was not quick enough.

"Och, you dirty thavin' blackguard, take that!"

A fist shot out of the little opening in the side of the covered chair, and a blow like that of trip-hammer caught the Chinese on the jaw and dashed him against the steep hillside. Then, with a spring which knocked his forward chair-bearer off his feet, Gorman was out in the open ready for action.

He was none too soon. Supple as a cat, the Chinese had rolled over and, lying on the ground, was already taking aim. But Gorman was too quick. The rifle was dashed aside and discharged harmlessly along the mountain slope. In another instant it was wrenched out of the hands of the Chinese and flung across the path, down the bank into the river. Then, gripping his adversary by the neck-band of his short blue jacket, the Irishman, with one tremendous heave of hand and foot together, lifted the Chinese clear of the ground and pitched him headlong after his rifle. The last wild scream of rage and fear ended in the splash of the falling body. The swift dark water swept it out of sight.

"Begorra, an' ye'll not abuse definseless women anny more!"

At the first sound of Gorman's voice mingling with the shrill clamour of the Chinese, Sinclair had sprung from his chair with a big .44 revolver in his hand, ready for action. He did not know what had brought on the scrimmage. But a glance showed him that, while Gorman was quite able to cope with the present situation, there was a possibility of serious danger. A few long strides brought him to where the sergeant

had just flung his opponent down the bank into the river.

The screams of terror of the women redoubled at the sight of the two foreigners. The size of Sinclair, the fierce vigour of Gorman, the fair complexions, the foreign dress and foreign weapons of both, brought to mind the stories they had heard from infancy of the great, green-eyed, red-faced, hairy barbarians who came from over the sea, who knew not the rules of good conduct, and who, whenever they got the chance, maltreated the sons and daughters of Han.

Cries of "Ang-mng! Ang-mng!" (Red-heads), "Hoan-a-kui!" (Foreign devils) rose above the inarticulate shrieks of fear.

Sergeant Gorman was equal to the occasion. Utterly unmindful of the wild disorder about him, he busied himself gathering up the articles of jewellery which the thief had dropped in the struggle. Then with his best Chinese and profound bows he returned these to the women from whom they had been torn.

For a moment the terrified women could not realize his meaning. When they did, their shrill cries of "Ang-mng!" and "Hoan-a-kui!" gave place to that of "Ho-sim! Ho-sim!" (Good heart).

At the same time the student guide, getting an opportunity to make his voice heard, was explaining that these were not Frenchmen, but Englishmen, that they were friends of the missionary, Kai Bok-su, and that they were doctors going to heal the Chinese who had been wounded in the battle with the French. Again the cry "Ho-sim!" (Good heart) rose from the fugitives. Only some of the rascally looters looked at them with evil eyes and sullen faces.

Sending their chairs back, Dr. Sinclair, Sergeant

Gorman, and their Chinese companions proceeded on foot. Before long they turned off into a path leading in an easterly direction and soon touched the Chinese lines. The order from the governor's deputy gained them courteous treatment, and they were conducted to the general's headquarters at the village of Loan-Loan.

XI

THE LIFE-HEALER IS COME

DR. MacKAY had prepared the Chinese commander for their coming. Liu Ming-chuan lost no time in meaningless formalities. He read their passports, thanked them for coming, issued orders giving Dr. Sinclair a free hand in dealing with the sick and wounded, and in half an hour saw him beginning his work.

"I am glad you have come," said MacKay. "I was sure you would." The keen black eyes looked straight into Sinclair's blue ones. "I was sure you would," he repeated. "You want to do good to humanity. I never saw a time when it was more needed. God sent you here for this very time."

"I hope that may be true," replied Sinclair. "For the present we must get busy. Have many wounded been brought in?"

"More than a hundred. But I believe that there are many more in the various forts or on the open hillsides, lying where they fell. There has been no system about collecting the wounded."

"That will be for you to organize, sergeant—an ambulance corps."

"Bedad, sir, an' if they'll give me the men I ask for I'll train them till they can pick up a wounded man before he falls."

"That's what we want, sergeant. Meanwhile, Dr. MacKay, what accommodation can they give us?

Just as we went into the governor's you spoke of a hospital. Have you succeeded in improvising one?"

"That's where we are going now. You can see for yourself. Here we are."

He turned into a narrow lane. As he did so the pungent odour of disinfectants reached their nostrils. Another sharp turn and he stopped at the door of a long, low, but well-built house of durable burned brick. They had approached it from the back. On the other side two long buildings extended from each end of the main structure, at right angles to it, with it forming three sides of a square and enclosing a large paved courtyard. The fourth side had been shut in by a high fence of interwoven bamboos. But this had been cleared away. Now the courtyard opened directly on a beautiful, swift-flowing stream, a branch of the Tamsui River. Mountains clothed with verdure from base to summit rose from the farther shore. A soft breeze blew up the river and, eddying in the courtyard, modified the intense heat. A clump of feathery bamboos nodded gracefully over the buildings.

On the earthen floor of the houses, on the cobblestones which paved the courtyard, on the ground outside, quicklime had been plentifully scattered. A strong odour of carbolic told that other precautions had been taken.

Sinclair passed through the building with long, swift strides, his eyes seeing everything. He paused when he reached the river bank and noted the means provided for the disposal of sewage. Then he turned to MacKay:

"Had any provision been made for this before you arrived?"

"None."

"Had the Chinese done nothing to care for their wounded?"

"Nothing."

"Did their doctors help you to get this hospital in shape?"

"No. They opposed me all they could."

"MacKay, you're a marvel."

"Do not praise me. You have not looked at the wounded yet. They are suffering. You must remember that I am not a qualified medical doctor. I am a preacher of the gospel. I know little of medicine, and almost nothing of surgery."

"The more wonder that you have accomplished so much!"

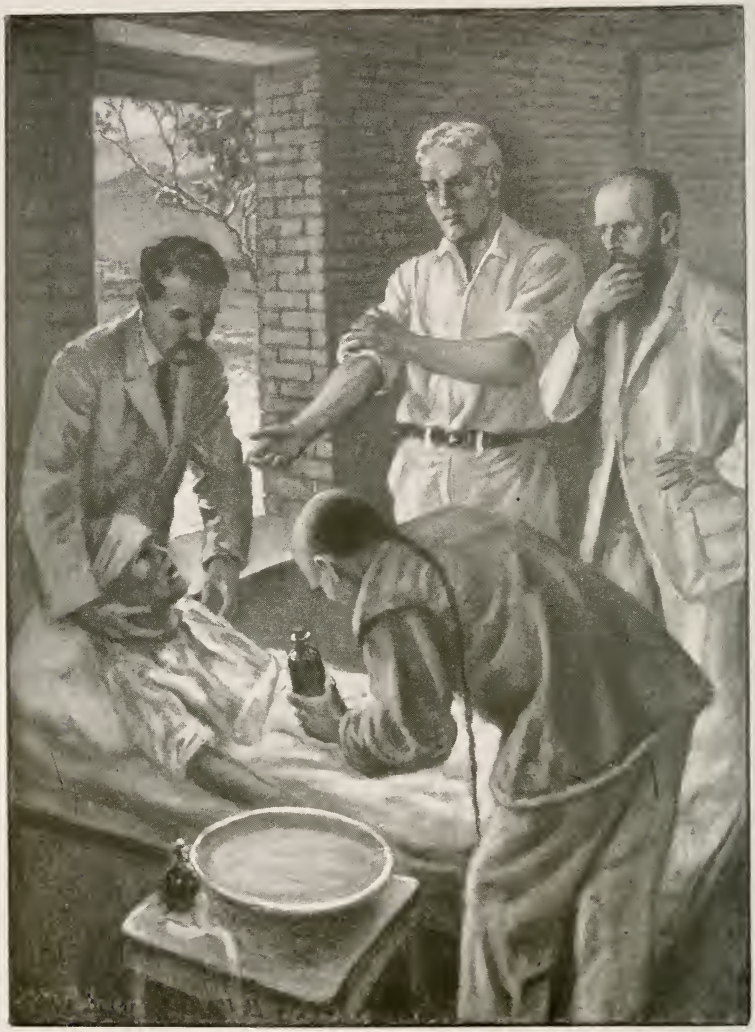
"It is my work. My Master not only healed the souls of men, but relieved the suffering of their bodies. To the best of my ability I try to do the same."

"You're right. That's what we're here for—to make life better for as many as we can. There are a lot here who need our help. Let us get busy."

They stepped again into the main building and stood in the narrow passage between the rows of bare trestle boards which served as beds. Wounded men were lying there as close together as was possible and yet leave room for a doctor to step in beside them. There was a hum of conversation, but very little moaning, and rarely a cry of pain. The Chinese, so noisy in their times of sorrow or of joy, so clamorous in their excitement, are strangely silent in pain and bear suffering stoically.

Dr. MacKay lifted his voice so that all could hear, speaking in Chinese.

"Friends," he said, "the physician of whom I told



Sinclair threw off his coat, rolled up his sleeves, and went to work

you has come. Listen to him. Submit to his treatment. Do what he tells you. He will heal you. He will give you your lives again."

At the sound of his voice all other voices were hushed. Thin brown forms turned painfully on the bare boards; rows of black heads were raised from the hard bolsters; black eyes looked out of bronze or ghastly yellow faces at the fair giant who towered above the black-bearded missionary; from lip to lip the word passed down the lines:

"I-seng lâi!* I-seng lâi!" (The doctor is come. Literally, the life-healer is come.)

Without a word Sinclair threw off his coat, rolled up his sleeves, and went to work. Sergeant Gorman and one of MacKay's students went first, preparing each case for treatment. Sinclair followed, with MacKay to assist and interpret and another student to carry basins of water.

The wounds were nearly all caused by shells or shrapnel. There were no clean wounds by rifle bullets. The range had been too great and the Chinese too well protected behind their fortifications. The mitrailleuses had accomplished little. They were noisy, terrifying, spectacular, but ineffective. Only once had a machine gun done much execution. A part of the fortifications on the east side of the harbour had been rendered untenable by the heavy shell-fire. A body of Chinese regulars were retreating to the new fort in too close formation. The marines working a mitrailleuse in the *Villars'* tops, found their range perfectly and poured a stream of bullets into their midst, killing many and threatening the whole detachment with extermination. But just at the critical

* Pronounced, Ee-see-ung li.

moment the quick-firer jammed, and all the oaths and efforts of the squad could not get it into working order again until the Chinese were under cover.

The sights were all the more ghastly, the suffering the more intense, the prospects of recovery the fewer because the death-dealing had been done by shell and shrapnel. There was nothing clean-cut about their work. A fragment of shell had shorn away a man's left shoulder, taking with it the joint, but missing the axillary artery and part of the great breast muscle, by which the arm still hung.

Sinclair glanced at MacKay. The latter understood:

"Better not have an amputation first thing. They are ignorant and suspicious."

"I thought so. Anyway, I do not want to take time to amputate now. We'll dress it and amputate later."

A shrapnel shell had exploded close to another's side. The hip, part of the pelvis, and much of the flesh had been shredded away, exposing the working of the organs of the abdomen. It was not good to see. From that ghastly rent blood-poisoning had already set in. There was nothing to be done. They made him as easy as possible on the hard boards of his cot, administered an opiate, and left him to sleep till the last sleep should fall upon him.

One had been struck just above the ear, and a chip of his skull three inches in diameter shot away, leaving his brain uncovered.

"He will die. We'll make him comfortable in the meantime."

A fragment had caught another on the cheek, and his lower jaw was gone.

"Better if he would die, too. It would be a mercy to let him out easy. But, no; if God gives him a chance, so must I. We'll patch him up."

More to himself than to any one else, he was speaking in a low tone. All the while the doctor's hands were busy dressing, soothing, trimming, mending, healing those poor, shattered bodies of ignorant Asiatic peasants, the weak atoms of humanity which a great European nation had sent her mighty engines of death to destroy—the pitiful trophies of glorious war. And not one of those brown or yellow men had the faintest glimmer of an idea what the war was about, or why his poor body had been maltreated so. The foreign devils had come to take his land and he had been set to defend it. That was all he knew.

Stranger still was what these other foreign devils were doing. They were trying to heal him. One set of foreign devils by their magic had knocked his fortifications to pieces, mangled his body, and brought him to the verge of death. And now another set of foreign devils, by some other magic, were patching his broken body together again and bringing it back to life. He could not understand.

But some way or another those last foreigners grew into his confidence. There was something in the words of that barbarian with the long black beard, who spoke their language more perfectly than they did themselves, which quieted him and gave him hope. There was something about the great, red-haired giant,* who did not seem to understand their language at all and yet seemed to understand at once

*The Chinese do not distinguish between the different shades of fair hair. All that is not jet black, is called red.

what his sufferings were and how to heal them, which inspired him with confidence. It might be magic he was using, but it must be good magic. Before him men were writhing restlessly on their wooden beds, sometimes moaning, occasionally uttering an agonized "âi-yah," ever and anon asking plaintively for water or tea. Behind him they lay back peacefully and, with few exceptions, went to sleep.

So all down the rows of improvised cots heads were raised, yellow or brown faces were turned, and black eyes, some anxious, some curious, still more wistful, watched every movement of the foreign doctor. His size, the massive head with its crown of wavy, fair hair, his huge shoulders, his bare arms, powerful and white beside their skinny brown ones, all were noted. Why did he wash his hands so often? It was a part of his magic. What was he going to do with that knife? Was he going to cut the man's heart out? No, he used it on one farther down, and now the man was sitting up drinking tea. So they watched, and so confidence grew. And at every movement the doctor made from cot to cot, the word "I-seng lâi" (the life-healer is coming) was passed from one to another of the patients.

The sun had sunk behind the hills and night was coming on. Smoky Chinese lamps and one good lantern belonging to MacKay were lighted. Still Sinclair worked on.

"You had better stop long enough to get something to eat," said MacKay.

"Thank you, MacKay; but I haven't time just now. Minutes mean lives to some of these men."

"Well, you must take a cup of tea. The boy will bring some to you here."

"Very well."

Standing at the foot of a cot studying a case, he hastily gulped down several tiny native cups of tea, without either sugar or milk. Then he was at work again.

The night was wearing on—the dark, close, hot night, with a temperature only a couple of degrees cooler than in the middle of the day. Still he worked swiftly, certainly, almost silently. What a transformation from the evening before, at the consul's dinner party! The lazy grace of the big, powerful frame, which had caught the consul's eye, was gone. Every line of the body, every play of muscles spoke of intense, forceful energy, and yet energy which was under perfect control. The physical strength which enabled him to lift a man like a child in his hands, or draw with apparent ease a dislocated hip-joint back into its place—the same self-controlled strength made his touch in another case as light as that of a delicate woman. The look of good-humoured interest with which he had studied the characteristics of his fellow-guests, or bandied repartee with Miss MacAllister, or amused the company with his songs, was gone. It was still a kindly face, a face which inspired confidence in even those ignorant Chinese soldiers over whom he bent. But no one who looked into that face would lightly trifle with the man in his present mood.

Every one present felt it. MacKay, something of an autocrat in his own sphere, read the face of the man beside him and never, except at his command to interpret for him or to give desired assistance, offered a suggestion. A group of Chinese officers came in, manifesting their usual supercilious air towards

foreigners. Talking loudly and pushing inquisitively forward, they got in Sinclair's way.

"Tell these fellows to shut their mouths and keep out of my road."

MacKay interpreted it, more courteously perhaps, but forcibly. It was in silence and at a respectful distance that the Chinese officers continued to look on. Presently some more came in, louder spoken and more inquisitive than the first.

"Tell that last bunch to get out. The rest can stay if they want. Tell their senior officer to set a guard. I'll have no more in here except on business."

It was done.

The night wore on. Some of the hopeless cases found relief in death. From time to time others were brought in to take their places. Some of these had now been nearly forty-eight hours since being wounded, lying out in the long grass and brushwood of the hillsides or crawling slowly, painfully towards safety. Worse still, some had been through the hands of native quack doctors.

The brief, grey dawn, followed by the swift sunrise, took the place of the night. Still Sinclair worked on, for still the pleading, wistful eyes of suffering men were watching his movements and still he heard them say in words whose meaning he had come to understand:

"I-seng lâi" (The life-healer comes).

As he straightened himself after bending over a patient, Sergeant Gorman saluted him:

"Excuse me, sir; but a bad case has just come in. If I am not mistaken, it is more in need of immediate treatment than any of the others I have seen."

The jocular manner, the excessive brogue, the constant tendency to bulls and repetitions had dropped from Sergeant Gorman like a cloak. His manner was serious; his accent hardly noticeable; his bearing that of a thoroughly capable and efficient officer on important duty.

"What is the injury, sergeant?"

"A hand shot off at the wrist. The poor devil tied a cord around it to stop the blood. Been that way for two days without dressing. It's badly swollen, gangrened, and fly-blown."

"Very well, sergeant. I guess we'll have to amputate at once. Where is the patient?"

"In the operating tent."

Swiftly, surely the work was done, and the man carried back to a cot of boards in the improvised hospital.

Sinclair was turning back to the wards to attend to other cases when an exclamation from MacKay arrested him:

"Lee Ban! Is it possible?"

A sampan had come down with the current and run its bow ashore at the hospital. A man was lifted out and deposited on the bank, up which he crawled painfully on hands and knees. His face was drawn and ghastly with suffering. His clothing, which had once been rich, was torn to ribbons.

It was Lee Ban, one of the wealthiest merchants of Keelung. He had sent his family away to safety earlier, but had to stay himself till the day of the bombardment. When escaping from the town a shell had exploded near his chair. A fragment had passed through the bottom of it, at the same time shearing away the entire calf from one of his legs. He had

paid the chair-bearers generously. But they fled for their lives and left him where he lay. He had the name of being the most charitable citizen of Keelung, and he saw many a one that day whom he had helped with his means. But they rushed past him, utterly unheeding. War had kindled in them the primal instinct of self-preservation, and had subordinated every human feeling to brute fear.

He bound his leg as best he could and started to crawl towards safety. All day he crept on hands and knees, and through the night until he lay exhausted and unconscious. In the morning he bribed some soldiers who were searching for wounded to carry him to the camp. They took him to a native doctor, who plastered the great open wound with a mixture of mud and cow-dung. Then he heard that Kai Bok-su was here, and the foreign doctor. He had himself brought to them.

While he told his story in Chinese to MacKay, Sergeant Gorman and his helpers had carried him to a cot and were unbandaging the leg for the doctor's inspection.

"For the love of heaven!"

The great, gaping wound, extending from the knee to the ankle, was alive with maggots.

This also is one of the glories of war.

XII

MATUTINAL CONFIDENCES

EIGHT o'clock on the morning Dr. Sinclair left Tamsui for the front found the consul in the breakfast room. Clean-shaven, dressed in spotless white, he looked as cool and fresh, and was as prompt to the minute, as if he had enjoyed a perfect night's rest. A moment or two later Mrs. Beauchamp entered.

"Good-morning, Harry. I am afraid that I have disgraced myself by being late," she said with a little mock anxiety.

"Not at all, my dear. My wife is never late. I think my watch is a few seconds fast."

"Thank you, Harry. You always find an excuse for me."

"Oh, no! it is not that," replied her husband, as if ashamed that he should allow any partiality to cause him to swerve from his rigid rule of punctuality. "Really, I am a little ahead of time. I'm deuced hungry this morning. I could hardly wait for Ah Soon to get breakfast ready."

"What time did you come to bed last night? I believe that I did not hear you at all."

"You certainly did not. You were sleeping so soundly that the French might have bombarded Tamsui and come ashore and carried you off without you waking."

"Oh, Harry! I think that's real mean of you. You

know perfectly that I know your step and movements so well, that I sleep just as soundly when you are moving about as when there is absolute silence. But any other person's step would waken me at once."

"You're right there. I do not believe that you heard me this morning, either."

"No, I did not. What time did you rise? I think it is not a bit fair of you to steal out of bed like that without awaking me. And then to wait down here with your watch in your hand to catch me ten seconds late! I do not like that. I have a mind to get offended."

"Hold! This is getting tragic.

> 'You've ungently, Brutus,
> Stole from my bed . . . . . .
> You stared upon me with ungentle looks.
> . . . . . then you scratch'd your head,
> And too impatiently stamped with your foot.'

Let's change the subject. May I have another cup of coffee?"

"What an anti-climax! From high tragedy to hot coffee! How shocking!"

"Where is Constance?"

"I fancy that she is sleeping yet."

"Was she not put to bed at her usual time?"

"Yes. But the amah says that, once the singing began, she wakened up and insisted on getting out where she could hear it better. She was out on the upper verandah all the time. So she didn't waken as early as usual. But she'll be down soon."

"She should have been made stay in bed."

"Oh, well! we cannot tie her down too hard and fast. She dearly loves singing, and she has taken a most extraordinary fancy to Dr. Sinclair."

"I do not mind how much fancy she may take to Sinclair. But there are some of the others who were here last night whom I do not want her to meet any more than she must. By the way, Sinclair is off to the war."

"Off to the war! What to do?"

"To give his services as a doctor to the Chinese and to try to organize a Red Cross corps for them."

"How interesting! But is it not very dangerous for a foreigner to venture among the Chinese just now? Especially one who is a stranger and does not know the language?"

"It is a little. But Dr. MacKay is over there at present. I also let Sergeant Gorman go with Sinclair. Each is an expert in his own line. They are all pretty shrewd. I do not think that they are likely to get into trouble. Gardenier is lending me a man to take Gorman's place."

"When did they leave?"

"By the first launch this morning."

A light was dawning on Mrs. Beauchamp's mind:

"There was no mention of this at dinner last evening. When did Dr. Sinclair decide to go?"

"Just after he bade you good-night. He got a letter from MacKay, asking him to go, and decided at once."

"And all the arrangements had to be made, passports and everything else drawn up between then and the first launch this morning."

The consul's eyes were dancing and his face was a study:

"It had to be done."

"You base deceiver! After all your talk about my sleeping so soundly, you were never in bed at all."

The consul laid back his head and laughed till even the grave, slant-eyed Celestial waiter hurried into the room to see if there was need of assistance.

"You missed me a whole lot, didn't you, Gwen?"

"I do not want to talk to you."

"Oh, yes, you do! We'll change the subject again."

"You needn't. I shall not talk."

"Yes, you will. How ever did Miss MacAllister get such a spite at Sinclair as she showed last evening?"

"Spite!" (with immense contempt). "Spite!" (still more contemptuously).

"Well, I do not know what else you would call it. She made game of him and bally-ragged him at every turn. If he hadn't been so well able to take care of himself, I should have had to interfere and protect him, since he was our guest."

"And you think that it was because she had a spite at him? It's a lot a man, even a married man, knows about the ways of a woman."

"I'll acknowledge it, Gwen. 'There be three things which are too wonderful for me, yea, four which I know not,' and the most wonderful of the four are the ways of a maid with a man." He took the chance that she would not notice the inversion; and she did not. "Solomon was much more married than I am, and he did not understand the ways of a woman, Gwen. It's not fair to expect it of me."

She did not know whether to laugh or not. It was hard to resist the serio-comic, mock-penitent expression on his face. She felt like punishing him by breaking off the conversation. But the subject was too interesting to drop. That was what he had counted on, and he judged wisely.

"I should have thought that a man who had been married nearly a dozen years, and who had such a wide ante-nuptial experience, ought to be able to recognize the symptoms when a woman is falling in love."

"Do you mean to say that the way Miss MacAllister treated Sinclair last evening is a symptom that she is falling in love with him?"

"I do."

"It looks more to me like cruelty to animals."

"She'll make up for the cruelty afterwards."

"Or falling in love with the other fellow."

"Well, it isn't."

"But you didn't act like that with me."

"You silly."

"Serious! I mean it."

"You caught me before I was old enough to know any better. I was hopelessly gone before I knew what was the matter with me."

"Are you sorry?"

"No, Harry; you know that I'm not."

Their hands touched for a moment across the corner of the little breakfast table. Their eyes looked at each other as they had looked in the days when he, the young student interpreter, who had just got his first step in the service and was home on his first furlough, with all the romance about him of having lived in the Far East amidst far, strange peoples, won the love of the young girl, fresh out of a boarding-school. A flush suffused her delicate face, making it look very youthful and beautiful.

It was in a gentle tone that the husband continued:

"You really think that this is what is the matter

with Miss MacAllister, that she is in danger of losing her heart to the big Canadian doctor?"

"Yes, I do. She told me that they had a bit of a tiff coming over on the *Hailoong*, and that she sauced him shamefully. But he got back at her before they left the boat, and now she wants to get even. She knows that there is something wrong with her, and has a suspicion what it is. That is what makes her so hard on him. She doesn't want to give in."

"A case of playing with fire?"

"Yes, I fancy it is."

"Well, it may be only a passing flirtation, quite harmless to all concerned. But if it is anything more, and she has a notion of turning this Asiatic trip of hers into a matrimonial venture, by Jove! I believe that big doctor, with all his notions about being a missionary, is the best investment she could make in these parts."

"Her mother doesn't think so."

"What has she in view?"

"A title."

"What! Carteret?"

"Yes."

"The thundering old fool!"

"Oh, Harry!"

"I mean it. If you weren't here, Gwen, I'd swear. It's always the way with those tradespeople who have started as peasants or domestics and made money. They would sell themselves or their daughters to the devil for a title. If Beelzebub, the prince of the devils, came along they would marry a daughter to him, so as to be able to speak of her as Her Royal Highness the Princess of the Devils."

"Oh, Harry, stop! You mustn't say that. Surely Mr. Carteret is not so bad as that."

"He's not far short of it."

"You never told me that."

"There are a lot of things I don't tell you. They wouldn't be pleasant for you to hear, nor for me to tell. And, anyway, in this little hole-in-the-corner of the world you have to associate with all those fellows more or less. It's easier for you if you do not know too much about them."

"But the men here are not all bad, are they?"

"Oh, no! No! I wouldn't have you think that. Some of them, I think most of them, are as good as you could get at home. But there are others. And Carteret is one of the others."

"Mrs. MacAllister does not know that."

"Perhaps not. But she has seen enough of the world to know the difference between a man like Sinclair and one like Carteret."

"I am afraid that it is the title. She told me that his father, the present lord, is an old man and cannot live long; and that his older brother, the present heir, is dying of consumption—as she expressed it, 'has only one lung.' So she thinks that Carteret is sure to succeed to the title soon."

"Yes; and in the meantime the two brothers love each other so that the heir will not hear of this prospective supplanter being nearer to him than China is to England. Esau and Jacob! And Mrs. MacAllister would give her daughter to that scavenger, and the MacAllister money to fix up the Carteret estates, just to have a title in the family! Gwen, I want to swear."

"Oh, Harry, you are shocking!"

"Can't help it, Gwen. I must swear."

"Well, Harry, if it will save you from injury——"

"It's damnable! . . . Thanks, awfully, Gwen. I feel some better now."

"I hope that you'll not have another attack for some time."

"Then we'll have to talk about something else."

"What a marvellously versatile entertainer Dr. Sinclair is! I think that he is quite a wonder."

"What is better, he has both brains and gumption. He was as keen on getting to the front as a hound on a scent. But, unlike most hounds, he didn't give tongue. He said nothing. Just went, and that at once."

"I was afraid that it would come to a passage at arms between him and Carteret? Did you ever hear so much insult put into the tone of voice as Carteret did last evening?"

"It will be a bad day for Carteret when he pushes Sinclair too far. Most men from Sinclair's country don't take much stock in titles. They would pull a peer's nose just as soon as a peasant's. That's the kind of Sinclair. . . . Hallo, Puss, what time is this to be getting down to breakfast?"

"Good-morning, daddy. This is a lovely time to be getting down, much nicer than eight o'clock. Good-morning, mother. Have you been up long?"

"Long enough to have my breakfast eaten. I hear that you were a bad girl last evening, Constance—that you didn't stay in bed or go to sleep till all hours."

But Constance—a tall, straight child of nine, with a step as light and graceful as that of a fawn, and a wealth of dark-brown curls framing her clear-cut fea-

tures and frank eyes—did not seem to be very penitent:

"Oh, mother, it was just lovely to hear the singing. I could have listened to you, and daddy, and Miss MacAllister, and Dr. Sinclair all night."

"Wise child!" remarked her father, somewhat grimly. "She knows the proper selection to make and whom to put first."

"There were others singing, Constance, besides the ones you mentioned," said her mother.

"Oh, yes; I know. I did not recognize some of the voices. But I knew Mr. Carteret's and Mr. De Vaux's."

"Mr. Carteret is a fine singer."

"Yes, I suppose. But I didn't like the way he sang. He put such a funny tone in his voice. He kind of—— Oh, I don't know how to describe it. It sounded like the way Carlo used to howl after daddy sent Fan over to Amoy."

"Good heavens!"

"And Mr. De Vaux's voice was just like my singing doll after I burst the bellows in her. She could give only one squeak, and then had to wait till I put some more wind into her before she could give another."

"That'll do, Constance; we've had enough of your opinions on singing. Get busy with your breakfast or you'll get none."

"All right, daddy."

"Boy! You tell coolie boys to roll the lawn. Tennis this afternoon. Can savey?"

"All lite! All lite! My can savey. Loll lawn. A-paw phah-kiû" (Afternoon strike-ball).

"Oh, goody! Dr. Sinclair will be here."

"No, Constance; Dr. Sinclair will not be here."

"Why, mother?"

"He has gone away over to Keelung to care for the sick and wounded after the battle."

"Oh, mother!" The finely-curved lips trembled. A big tear stole out of each eye.

"Mother, do you think that he might get killed?"

"No, Connie. I do not think that he is in any danger."

The big tears rolled down the cheeks and dropped.

"Mother, will he come back?"

"Yes, I think that he may come back in a little while."

"I'm so glad!"

"By Jove! I'll have to watch that Sinclair. He makes conquests of both old and young."

XIII

MORE CONFIDENCES

IN the building at the foot of the hill, near the shore, occupied by MacAllister, Munro Co. partly as a warehouse and partly as a residence for the company's European employees, another matrimonial *tête-à-tête* was taking place. De Vaux and his two or three assistants, the representatives of the big London firm in North Formosa, had found temporary quarters in the buildings of the customs' compound or with the staffs of other firms. Mr. and Mrs. MacAllister and their daughter, with the native servants, had the living-rooms of the big hong to themselves.

It was little more than seven o'clock, an extraordinary hour for rising the morning after a late dinner. But, with characteristic regularity of habits, Mr. MacAllister was already up and shaving. As was fitting at such an hour, he was clothed only in pyjamas and slippers. But even those shapeless garments were worn with an attention to neatness quite lacking in most men whom a score and a half of years of married life have made entirely indifferent to personal appearance in the intimacy of the bed-chamber. He had even taken the trouble to brush his hair, at least what was left of it—another extraordinary proceeding on the part of a man who was likely to be seen by no person but his wife.

The shaving process was nearly done. He was carefully feeling the hard spots on each side of his

chin to see if any offending hairs had escaped the relentless sweep of the razor and still projected within its range.

"Hector, you are a most extraordinary man."

The voice came from within the canopy of the mosquito curtains draped around the high-posted iron bed which occupied the centre of the room.

"Good-morning, my dear! Is it only now that you have found that out?"

"You are a most extraordinary man."

"What new marvel have you found in me, my dear?"

"To think that there is only about one hour of the twenty-four in this disgusting climate in which one can sleep comfortably and you would not allow me to have that, but must get up and disturb me by shaving."

"I am exceedingly sorry if I have disturbed you, my dear. But every time I wakened during the night you were sleeping very peacefully, and——"

"Not a bit of it! I have not slept at all."

"And when I got up you were not only sleeping, but snoring gently, and——"

"That's all nonsense! I've been wide-awake all night."

"And, although I have been about for nearly an hour, you continued to snore very gently until a moment before you spoke, and——"

"Hector, I'm astonished at you! You know perfectly well that I never sleep in hot weather. I do not understand why you ever chose to come to such a country as this in the summer."

"And now you are looking thoroughly refreshed and fit for anything, and——"

"I'm more tired than when I went to bed."

"And when you have your bath, and comb your hair, and are dressed, you will be as fresh and beautiful as you were when I brought you to London from the Highlands thirty years ago."

"Hector, it iss flattering me you would be."

She was sitting up now under the canopy of mosquito curtains. If an outsider could have looked in, he would probably have agreed that her husband was flattering shamefully. Unlike him, neatness in private was not one of her virtues. Her hair, black and luxuriant as in her girlhood, was tossed and tousled. The flesh, which had grown upon her with years, ungirt and unrestrained, flowed shapelessly with every movement.

But her face was still fresh in colour and comely in form. A little care about her appearance in the privacies of life would have made her perennially attractive to him, as attractive as when he had taken her as a bride. Perhaps at the moment she felt this. At any rate, the words of compliment and admiration were as sweet to the ears of the middle-aged woman as they had been to the young girl of thirty years before. Her little irritation about the disturbed slumbers and his chaffing manner passed like a summer cloud. Unconsciously she fell back into the accent of her girlhood when she said:

"Hector, it iss flattering me you would be."

He dressed with as much care of his personal appearance as if he were in London. Then he went out for a walk along the shore, pausing under the shade of some great banian trees to enjoy the magnificent scenery. Presently he returned to the room where his wife was now almost ready for breakfast.

"Our friends on board the *Hailoong* and the *Locust* are all up and active. But there is no stir anywhere else except among the Chinese. Neither De Vaux nor any of his staff have put in an appearance."

"They have fallen into the ways of this climate," replied his wife, "and sleep when it is possible to enjoy sleep."

"I am afraid De Vaux will not be in condition to do much to-day. He drank heavily last evening. He has been in our employ a long time, and as a rule has done very well. But I wish that he drank less."

"You must remember, Hector, the class to which Mr. De Vaux belongs. He is of noble family."

"All the more reason why he should keep control of himself. I was ashamed of him last night."

"But, Hector, people of rank all drink. You must not forget that Mr. De Vaux is a man of birth."

"Probably he was born some time, my dear. But from all accounts there does not seem to be much reason to be proud of the manner of it."

"Now, Hector, you ought to make allowance for the nobility. They have privileges which common people have not."

"They certainly seem to take them."

"That's not fair to people of rank, Hector. They have always been accustomed to do these things. Now with Dr. Sinclair, for example, it is quite different. He belongs to the common people and never had the chance to be anything else but respectable. But Mr. De Vaux and Mr. Carteret are men of quality. You couldn't expect them to be teetotallers and—and——"

"Decent," supplied her husband.

"Oh, I didn't mean just that."

"But that's about the fact," persisted Mr. MacAllister.

"No; I never heard anything against them. Mr. De Vaux has lived out here a long time. He may have fallen into the ways of the East. But I think that Mr. Carteret is a perfect gentleman."

Her husband looked at her keenly.

"He seemed to be willing to pay a good deal of attention to Jessie last evening."

"Yes," she replied, without returning his gaze. "He appears to be very much attracted by her."

"Was she attracted to him in return?"

"Why shouldn't she be? He is a handsome and most accomplished young man, and has the best prospects of succeeding to the title and estates."

"He is a younger son."

"Yes; but the heir has only one lung."

Her husband gave a short laugh.

"I have known one-lungers to live a long time," he said. "You mentioned Dr. Sinclair a moment ago. Whatever offence did Jessie take at him which led her to treat him so disagreeably?"

Mrs. MacAllister had just finished dressing and arranging her hair, and was taking a last look at herself in the mirror. She closed her lips tightly, threw back her head, and gave a little sniff:

"So you think she was offended at him," she said.

"What else could make her act the way she did last evening?"

"I wish that I could believe that you are right. But I am afraid that you are not."

"What do you mean?"

"I do not believe that she was a bit offended."

"Well, if she wasn't, I cannot see what possessed

her to act so badly. She did everything she could to make him uncomfortable. I feel as if I ought to make some explanation of her conduct or offer some apology."

There was another sniff as she answered tartly:

"It would be wiser not to."

"But her behaviour was inexcusable and must have seemed so to Dr. Sinclair."

"All the better if it should remain so."

"Why?"

She made no answer.

"It seems to me," he continued, "that both you and she are inexplicable sometimes."

"That is because you have the usual stupidity of a man about everything in which women are concerned."

XIV

THE APPEAL OF THE HEROIC

"IS Jessie ready for breakfast?"

"Yes, she was ready before we were. She is on the verandah."

"I think we had better sit down. There is no use waiting any longer for De Vaux. I am afraid that he is not in a condition to appear. You had better call Jessie."

At that moment the tall, graceful figure of their daughter appeared in the bright light of the verandah, was framed for an instant in the doorway, and then came in, seeming to bring a wealth of light and brightness into the somewhat gloomy apartment where they were to breakfast. What a picture she made! The rich rose of her cheeks, the masses of her brown hair, the deep violet eyes were brought into sharp contrast with the white of her tropic attire.

Her father's eyes rested on her proudly, but fondly. Her mother too was proud of her rare young beauty, as it seemed to irradiate the room and drive away the shadows. But her pride in her daughter was different from the father's. Mr. MacAllister thought of her only as their daughter—beautiful, winsome, teasing sometimes, but so true in her love and dutifulness that she had never really caused an anxious thought. He loved her for her own sake, and hers alone. He felt a twinge of pain every time the thought

entered his mind that the day would come when she would be separated from them. Mrs. MacAllister thought of her as possessed not only of grace and beauty, but of that culture and social training which she herself so sadly lacked. She thought of her as qualified to be a queen in the world of society; dreamed of the day when she should bear a great, old family name, perhaps that of a noble house, and should shed a reflected glory on the MacAllisters, who had acquired wealth and luxury, but could not contrive a history. Hers was a love of ambition.

Was the attitude of the daughter towards her father and mother an instinctive though perhaps unconscious response to the differing attitudes of her parents to her?

"Good-morning, father! Good-morning, mother!"

The conventional phrases were identical in form. But there was a world of difference in the accent. She kissed her mother somewhat perfunctorily. But she threw her arms around her father's neck, kissed him tenderly, and laid her proud head with its wealth of hair for a moment on his shoulder. Then she lifted it and asked very demurely:

"Is not Mr. De Vaux to breakfast with us this morning?"

"He promised to do so. But it is already nearly half an hour past the time we appointed."

"Perhaps he is still being 'Rocked in the Cradle of the Deep.'"

"Whist, Jessie, lass! You mustn't make fun of people's weakness."

"Father, why do men, when they find themselves getting drunk, take another glass of whiskey and soda, 'just to straighten up'? It seems to me that every

glass of it they take makes them sillier and more stupid than they were before."

"Why do you ask me, Jessie? You know that I am almost a teetotaller. You should answer that question yourself. You were championing the cause of drinking last evening against Dr. Sinclair."

"Now, father, that's not fair." A slight flush appeared on her neck and flowed upwards, deepening the rich colour of her face. "You know that I didn't mean that, especially when there were men around me drinking themselves into imbecility."

"Then, why did you say it?"

Her father's eyes, kindly but keen, were searching her face. She felt a fresh wave of hot blood mounting upwards:

"Oh, I don't know! You ought to have learned by this time that a woman cannot always give reasons even to herself why she does things."

"Well, whatever you did it for, you succeeded in making Dr. Sinclair very uncomfortable for a while."

"He deserves to be made uncomfortable," she flashed back. "He makes other people feel very uncomfortable sometimes."

She glanced at her mother. Mrs. MacAllister's lips were tightly closed. Her nose was elevated a bit. She was about to sniff at something. She had not time. A high-pitched voice was heard outside:

"Get out of my way, boy. Bless my soul! Chop-chop! You are most exasperating."

A heavy footstep sounded on the stairway leading to the second story, where the living-rooms were. There were short gasps of laboured breathing, and De Vaux burst into the room, peering blindly in the semi-darkness after the brilliant sunshine without.

"Good-morning, Mr. De Vaux. You are just in time to join us at breakfast. We thought something had occurred to detain you. But we have just this moment sat down. Pardon us for not waiting on you. We are delighted that you are able to be with us."

Mrs. MacAllister was kind, almost effusive, in her welcome. But De Vaux could find no words to excuse his delinquency:

"Mrs. MacAllister! . . . I have disgraced myself. . . . 'Pon my soul! . . . Mr. MacAllister! . . . This never happened to me before. . . . 'Pon my honour, as a gentleman! . . . I'm ashamed of myself. . . . Miss MacAllister! . . . To think that I was to have the honour of having breakfast with you —and—I was late! . . . Bless my soul! . . . I do not know what to think of myself."

The head of the firm was gravely considerate and courteous towards the firm's agent, whose weakness he had noted the evening before.

"Accidents will happen sometimes, Mr. De Vaux. Allow me to assure you that you have caused us no inconvenience this morning. Will you not be seated and have breakfast with us?"

With some difficulty the stream of De Vaux's apologies and the succession of his bows were interrupted, and he was induced to be seated. But his face was purple and his eyes were bulging and bloodshot. Miss MacAllister could not resist the temptation.

"Mr. De Vaux," she said, "I am afraid that you have hurried too much in the heat. The blood has rushed to your head. I am really concerned lest you should have an attack of apoplexy. I have always been so afraid of apoplexy since our old butler died of an attack after celebrating patriotically but un-

wisely the bombardment of Alexandria. Will you not allow me to order a cold soda for you? Boy, one piecee soda, ice cold!"

"All lite! All lite! One piecee ise col' soda!"

What more she might have said remains unknown, for a warning look and a shake of the head from her farther prevented her pursuing her victim any farther. As it was, De Vaux was in a state of gurgling, stuttering impotence:

"Bless my soul! . . . Miss MacAllister! . . . Who else would have thought of it? . . . Lord! . . . Miss MacAllister! . . . You have the kindness of an angel. . . . 'Pon my soul, you have! . . . I assure you that I am quite well. . . . Nothing the matter with me. . . . Except that I sat up a little late with Carteret. . . . Talked over the delightful evening we had. . . . Nothing else, I assure you. . . . 'Pon my honour!"

"And how is Mr. Carteret this morning?" inquired Mrs. MacAllister solicitously. "I hope that he is very well."

"My dear Mrs. MacAllister, make your mind easy about that. He is sleeping quite naturally and soundly. . . . 'Pon my word of honour, he is! . . . The commissioner tried to waken him to go to the office. . . . But he couldn't. . . . Not even with a bucket of water. . . . 'Pon my soul, that's the truth! . . . I never saw a man sleep so soundly. . . . But he will be all right by this afternoon. He will waken up for tennis. . . . He's our best tennis player. . . . Bless my soul! There's no danger of his missing the tennis."

Miss MacAllister had tried to control herself through this exposé. But by the time De Vaux had

finished the merry peal of laughter rang out without restraint. Her mother looked annoyed and mortified. Her father, scarcely able to conceal a smile, was diplomatically trying to lead De Vaux to some other subject.

"Did you chance to hear any more news of how the day went at Keelung, Mr. De Vaux?" he asked. "Have any reports come in from the Chinese side?"

"Bless my soul! . . . How did I forget to tell you? . . . I met Captain Whiteley as I came down. . . . Mrs. MacAllister, that is one of the reasons why I was late. . . . 'Pon my word! I was so upset and ashamed of myself that I could not present my apologies. . . . I beg your pardon, Mr. MacAllister. . . . Captain Whiteley told me that Dr. Sinclair was off to the front this morning before daybreak. . . . By——! . . . 'Pon my soul, I mean, I was never so surprised in my life."

"Dr. Sinclair! Off to the front!" Mr. and Mrs. MacAllister spoke together.

"Yes," replied De Vaux. "He has gone to serve as a doctor with the Chinese army. . . . Never heard of a man taking such risk. . . . It's sheer suicide. . . . By——! . . . 'Pon my soul, it is!"

Mrs. MacAllister glanced at her daughter, and her husband's eyes followed. Miss MacAllister was sitting up very erect and looking straight at De Vaux. Her lips were parted. Her face had paled a little. But her eyes were dark and glowing.

"Did any one go with him?" she asked abruptly.

"I believe that Sergeant Gorman, the constable at the consulate——"

"I mean did any of the gentlemen go? Any of the gentlemen we met at the consulate last evening?"

"Why! Bless my soul! No! . . . Not that I know of!" stuttered De Vaux.

"I wish that I were a man," she flashed back. "I would not see one man go out to a dangerous duty alone."

"But—but, my dear Miss MacAllister," blurted out De Vaux. "We did not know that he was going. . . . 'Pon my honour as a gentleman, we did not! . . . He left before we were awake."

"That's one advantage of being a teetotaller," was the quick reply.

Mrs. MacAllister elevated her nose and gave her characteristic sniff:

"I think that Dr. Sinclair is simply foolhardy. It is perfectly absurd for a man to risk his life for the sake of those dirty Chinese. I do not know how any one can bear to live among them, let alone having to touch them." (De Vaux got very red.) "And as for going into a whole army of them to heal their wounds, it's simply Quixotic" (she pronounced it Kwy-so-tic), "that's all it is; Quixotic."

De Vaux winced at the pronunciation—perhaps also at the sentiment. He began to gurgle unintelligibly. As usual, Mr. MacAllister came to the rescue.

"It was with the hope of getting an opportunity to do medical work among these people that Dr. Sinclair came to this country. I should think that the present situation offers him an admirable opening. A physician or surgeon who is really in love with his work does not stop to consider whether his patients are attractive or not. His one thought is to heal them."

"It is all very good to talk about sacrificing oneself to do good," replied his wife tartly. "And when I

am at home I just love to hear missionary sermons, and sometimes to attend women's missionary meetings. But to come out here and live among those natives and think you can make them any better and get them to know anything about the religion which educated, intelligent white people believe in, is sheer foolishness. I am very much disappointed in Dr. Sinclair. It is nothing but foolishness."

"I think that it is just splendid to do something like that," said her daughter. "Just think of it, to be over there where hundreds of men are being brought in wounded and to be the only one who can do anything for them! And to have those poor creatures wonder at the cures! Why wasn't I a man?"

"Yes, and have one of the dear, grateful creatures stick a knife into you when your back is turned," said her mother sarcastically.

But her daughter paid no attention to the interruption:

"Mr. De Vaux, do you know the country over there, around Keelung, where the fighting is going on? Of course you do. Won't you tell us all about it?"

So through the remainder of the breakfast she plied De Vaux with questions, and brought out the fact that he had really a remarkable store of knowledge about the island and its inhabitants. And all the while the father looked on, and occasionally thought of her conduct the evening before, and wondered. But her mother looked unutterable things, ever and anon interjected an acid remark, which served as pickles to the bill of fare, and frequently sniffed.

XV

THE LURE OF THE EAST

MOUNTAIN and river, land and sea slept that afternoon in the wealth of sunshine which flooded the earth. A scarcely perceptible sea-breeze ever and anon caused the lighter foliage to tremble. The great fronds of the palm trees hung absolutely motionless, the air quivered in the heat. Millions of cicadas shrilled in the trees and shrubbery. In some way or another their ceaseless quavering, shrilling notes seemed to fit in with the quivering wavelets of atmosphere, until one came to look upon them as cause and effect and inseparably associated. That tremulous atmosphere would not be complete without those quavering notes. The notes would not be complete without the atmosphere.

The native birds were all silent. Only the English sparrows seemed utterly indifferent to the heat. They fluttered and chirped and fought just as cheerfully as they would have done in the soft climate of their native England or amid the Arctic frosts of a Western Canadian January.

Human life was almost as quiescent as that of the birds. Down by the water-front of the town a number of junks were hastily loading in order to put to sea with the late afternoon tide. Around the *Hailoong* a little fleet of cargo boats clustered, busily discharging their lading into her hold. McLeod had evidently

been successful in his trip up-river. On the downs back of the consulate and the mission buildings Chinese soldiers were mounting cannon of many ages and designs on their earthworks.

These were the only signs of activity. The soldiers and cannon were the only indications of war. A great quiet rested over the beautiful landscape, a peace as cloudless as that summer sky.

Clang-clang! Clang-clang! Clang-clang! Clang-clang! Eight bells! Four o'clock! The brazen notes rang out from the *Hailoong.* Like an echo they were answered, only in silver tones as soft and sweet as those of a cathedral chime. Involuntarily one looked around for the church-spire and waited to hear the hymn tune come floating on the air. But there was no church, and there was no holy hymn. It was the bell of the trim little gunboat, *Locust,* resting out there on the bosom of the river striking the hour of four.

A group of white-clad figures appeared on the bright green of the consulate lawn. Other figures clad in white, men and women, were moving in ones and twos along the narrow road on the top of the hill or through the shrubbery of the consul's garden to join them. It might be a tropic land and a day of tropic sunshine. The natives of that land, all save those who were compelled to work, might be seeking shelter from the sun and waiting for the cool of the evening before again exposing themselves to its rays. But, like the sparrows from his home land, the Englishman could not rest. The sun had no terrors for him. If he had no work to do, he would have sport. The whole English-speaking population who could get away from their duties, whether residents or tran-

sients, were assembling for the afternoon game of tennis.

Yet they were not foolhardy in their exposure to the sun. They took precautions. Indeed, the striking thing about their sport was the trouble they had taken to make it comfortable and enjoyable.

The lawn, if it could not boast the carpet of green velvet which characterizes an English lawn, was well covered with close-set grass. In spite of the efforts of the great slugs to burrow it into holes and throw up pyramids of earth, daily rolling had kept it firm and smooth. A green wall of hedge, reënforced by wire netting, surrounded it. The big bulk of the old Dutch fort sheltered half of it from the rays of the declining sun. An oblong of sail-cloth, stretched between two tall masts, shaded the other half. The players had rarely ever occasion to be exposed to the sun. Chinese coolies, in the dark blue and red uniforms of the consul's service, two behind the players and two at the net, picked up the balls and handed them to the players. Long, comfortable settees and chairs, and a table laden with cool drinks, nestled against the hedge in the shadiest corner.

"Really, Mr. Beauchamp, this is the luxury of tennis. A canopy to shelter us! Coolies in livery to pick up the balls! I'm surprised that you do not have proxies to run for us, as they do in cricket when the veterans play. You really ought to have native boys to do the running."

"We're working on it, Miss MacAllister; we're working on it. Soon we'll be able to give it to the world. Brand new game! Tropical tennis! Latest thing in sport! Four players to a side! Two in the inner courts and two in the outer! Only two rackets

to a side! Native boys in liveries of smiles and sunshine to carry rackets from back to forward players and vice versa, as occasion to meet the ball requires. Great discovery! Carteret and I are working on it."

"Magnificent, Mr. Beauchamp! Magnificent!" exclaimed Miss MacAllister amidst a burst of laughter. "You and Mr. Carteret will be catalogued with Columbus and Sir Isaac Newton among the great benefactors of the race. When will you be able to bestow it upon mankind? I do hope that it may be while I am here."

"It would have been before this, were it not that Carteret and I differ on a small point, a mere detail."

"And what is that?"

"I think it sufficient to provide the players with easy-chairs in which to rest between strokes. But Carteret wants them to be permanently suspended in hammocks, and that the balls must be so served as to enable the players to return them without arising from a reclining position."

There was a peal of laughter at the consul's little absurdity. Carteret joined in with the rest. But his pallid face flushed at the palpable thrust at his well-known indolence.

Commander Gardenier was unable to come. But his second in command, Lieutenant Lanyon, a young Irishman, was delighted to escape the routine of duty on board ship for a day ashore and the company of some attractive ladies. With the headlong courage of his race, whether in love or in war, he immediately asked Miss MacAllister to be his partner in the first set, without waiting to see if that were agreeable to his host, who was arranging the players. His frank, boyish, open-eyed admiration of his choice was so

good to see that the consul, usually a bit of an autocrat in all such matters, laughingly accepted the situation.

"Carteret, will you take my wife as partner and defend the honour of the island? These two reckless young visitors have evidently taken it upon themselves to challenge the residents."

"Certainly, Mr. Beauchamp. I shall be delighted to have so skilful a partner as Mrs. Beauchamp. We shall endeavour to give a good account of ourselves. From their manner I should judge that our opponents are perfectly confident of winning."

He looked to where the young naval officer and Miss MacAllister were standing. They were already deep in conversation and apparently entirely oblivious to the rest of the company. He heard Lanyon say:

"By Jove! luck has come my way to-day. Little did I think when we were ordered to Tamsui that there would be such fortune before me as to meet any one like you. It does my heart good just to look at you."

Miss MacAllister laughed merrily.

"Do you always express yourself so frankly on so short acquaintance, Mr. Lanyon?" she asked. "I'm afraid that I cannot believe much of that. I think that you are Irish. You probably said the same thing to the last partner you had."

"By my soul, I did not. How could I? She was forty if she was a day, and ugly as sin."

His partner's laugh pealed out again. There was no resisting such an implication.

"Very nicely put, Mr. Lanyon. Now I know that you are Irish."

Just then Mrs. Beauchamp called to them:

"Come, come, Mr. Lanyon. I cannot allow this. You are monopolizing Miss MacAllister and delaying the play."

"By my faith," was the quick reply, "it's myself that would be mortial glad to monopolize her."

"Oh, Mr. Lanyon, this is shocking. On less than half an hour's acquaintance, too! If you say anything more like that I'll not be your partner."

"Then, if there's any danger of your leaving me, I'll take it all back with my mouth; but I'll think it in my heart just the same."

Carteret's pale face, a little paler to-day than usual, had the same expression of studied contempt as when he met Sinclair the evening before. His lips parted to utter some sarcastic remark when Mrs. Beauchamp interposed:

"It's your service, Miss MacAllister. Will you not begin?"

In a moment the lawn was animate with the quick-moving white figures of the players, and the blue and red of the attendant coolies. The contestants were all experts at the sport, and the set might have been prolonged indefinitely had it not been that Lanyon would not serve a fast ball to Mrs. Beauchamp. Again and again she assured him that she was quite capable of receiving a fast service and that he must not throw the game away. But the young lieutenant's Irish gallantry would not allow him to volley such balls at her as he drove at Carteret. On the other hand, the latter had no such scruples, but played to win. Consequently he and his partner did win rather handily.

When the set was over and others had taken their places, Carteret found an opportunity to engage Miss

MacAllister in conversation as they were seated in the shade of the old fort.

"I was disappointed not to have the pleasure of being your partner," he said. "I had been looking forward to it all day."

Instantly there flashed into her mind the picture of him De Vaux had painted that morning at breakfast, and she could scarcely repress a laugh. She wondered to herself how much of the day he had been in a condition to think of her. But she answered readily:

"I should be very pleased to be your partner for a set, Mr. Carteret. There will probably be an opportunity later. You are an expert at tennis."

"We all ought to be experts in this place," he replied. "We get plenty of practice. Outside of office hours there are only two pastimes open to us—cards on wet days and tennis when the weather is fine."

"Why," she exclaimed, "I should not have thought that! From what I have seen of Tamsui, I think that it is quite lively. With dinners and tennis, with warships coming and going, with always the possibility of seeing a row among the Chinese or between them and somebody else, I think it must be really exciting living here. I should think that it would be great sport."

"You may think so, Miss MacAllister, from what you have seen of it. But the condition you have seen is quite abnormal. We do not have London merchants nor ladies from London drawing-rooms visiting us every week. Neither do we have the company of naval officers on ordinary occasions. Perhaps, if we had more ladies, we might have the attention and protection of our gallant seamen more frequently."

His voice had the sneering tone of the evening before. Miss MacAllister's eyes flashed ominously. He saw the danger signal and quickly changed the tone and the topic:

"Really, Miss MacAllister, as a general rule this place is beastly dull. There are so few to associate with. No matter how enjoyable their company may be at first, it simply becomes unbearable when you have no one else, don't you know?"

"Do you think that is a universal rule, Mr. Carteret?"

He saw that he had made a tactical blunder, beat a hasty retreat, and executed a flank attack:

"I assure you, Miss MacAllister, that I had reference only to those with whom one is forced to associate in the casual relations of life. We are not associated by choice, but by the caprice of fortune or by compulsion. And the realization of the compulsion makes the association the more unbearable. We get to hate the very sight of one another."

"I can quite understand that," she replied. "I learned that when I had to spend a year in a very select boarding-school, with a principal and teachers whom I hated, and not one girl of whom I could make a real friend. I was more alone than if I had been like Robinson Crusoe on his island."

He was quick to pursue the advantage:

"That is it exactly. I should be far less lonely if I were entirely alone or if I had only one companion, so long as that companion were congenial."

She looked sympathetically at him, but did not speak.

"That is the tragedy of life in the Far East," he

continued. "That is why so many men take to drink."

She thought of the evening before and of what De Vaux had let out at breakfast. She said nothing; so he went on:

"That is why so many men become inveterate gamblers; why so many who came out with high hopes of accomplishing something end by committing suicide."

As he talked on in this strain, quietly, yet evidently with deep feeling, Miss MacAllister began to ask herself if she had not, in her own mind, judged this young aristocrat too harshly. Perhaps he was not so bad as she had thought him the evening before, when she had refused any longer to play his accompaniments. Perhaps there was some excuse for his being in the condition which De Vaux had blundered out to them that morning.

At any rate, he seemed to be revealing to her another side of his character. She had met him first as the graceful, polished man of the world, a little cynical perhaps, and yet so courteous in his manners towards her as to hide the unpleasant characteristics. She had noted his contemptuous attitude towards Sinclair, his look and tone of studied insult. She had caught a glimpse of the greedy, lustful expression in his eyes as he bent over her at the piano, and, before the evening was done, the leer of intoxication.

But here was another aspect which she had not looked for. Without appearing to seek sympathy, he was appealing to her feelings, and in spite of herself she responded:

"I had not thought of the life out here in that way," she said. "It had appeared quite fascinating to me."

"So it appears to nearly everybody at first. But after a while it palls upon them. At last it becomes unbearable."

"Then why do they not go home, or to Australia or America or somewhere else where they would be among their own people?"

"We are forgotten at home. We should be strangers there. And as for Australia or America, life out here unfits a man to succeed in lands where everybody must be his own servant and where there is no road to success but by hard work."

A little ray of comprehension shot into Miss MacAllister's mind. It was with a touch of impatience that she answered:

"But, Mr. Carteret, you do not mean to say that you have been long enough here to unfit you for work anywhere else. If you do not like the life, why do you stay here?"

"*Pro bono familiæ,*" he replied with a bitter laugh. "Because of the affection of my beloved elder brother."

"The consul tells me that he enjoys himself here," she said, avoiding any discussion of his family affairs. "He says that there is very good shooting and some of the best sea-bathing he has ever experienced."

"He is welcome to the shooting, tramping over the hills and through the rice fields in a climate like this. As for the bathing, any pleasure in it is spoiled by the walk home in the heat afterwards."

At that instant the consul, who was playing, returned a ball with such a screw on it that after falling in his opponent's court it bounded back over the net. His opponent, in a mad effort to return it, plunged

headlong into the net and fell. In celebration of which achievement the consul threw his racket high in the air, turned a handspring, and ended up by reversing himself and walking across the court on his hands, with his feet in the air.

"Splendid, Mr. Beauchamp!" cried Miss MacAllister. "Brilliantly done! Especially the gymnastic performance!"

"Right-oh, Miss MacAllister!" exclaimed a deep voice behind her. "The consul is acrobat enough to make a shining success as a sailor man."

It was Captain Whiteley, come up to drink a cup of tea and say good-bye before casting off for Hong-Kong.

"Oh, Captain Whiteley, I'm so glad to see you before you go! But what is this I hear? You have let your doctor go off to Keelung to carve Chinese, and perhaps be carved himself. I am surprised at you."

"Not my fault, I assure you, Miss MacAllister. He was bound to go. He is of age. I could not restrain him."

"I think it is just splendid of him to go. That is the sort of thing I admire in a man. If I were a man, that is what I should like to do."

"I am awfully glad, Miss MacAllister, that Sinclair has at last done something which pleases you. I was beginning to be afraid that you were offended with him past the possibility of reconciliation."

She looked at him sharply. His face was lamblike in its innocence, but his eyes were twinkling.

"That will do, Captain Whiteley. You have said quite enough."

The telltale colour deepened in her face, and her

mother, who was talking to Carteret nearby, heard and saw, closed her lips tightly, and sniffed.

The little party of white-clad players were still on the lawn when the *Hailoong* moved down the river, zigzagged her way through the field of mines, and once well beyond the bar steamed straight out over the motionless sea in the path of red-gold light from the setting sun. It seemed the breaking of the one link between them and the outside world. In the soft stillness of that evening in the Orient, London with its mud and smoke, its roar of traffic, its drab colours and familiar, unromantic life, seemed so far away that it might have belonged to another world.

Strange to say, it was not of London that Miss MacAllister was thinking. Again and again she surprised herself thinking of the big, fair-haired Canadian doctor. She tried to picture to herself his surroundings amid the sick and suffering, the men torn with shot and shell. She could not help contrasting them with the peaceful environment of the consul's tennis party, where men had been enjoying themselves in the company of the ladies, and incidentally emptying long glasses of whiskey and soda or sipping tea.

She recalled the looks of the man himself, his clean-cut features, straightforward gaze, his good-humour even when she was badgering him, and the hearty, boyish laugh when he and McLeod were plotting some mischief together. Involuntarily she contrasted him with the cynical discontent, the weary air and self-pity of the man with whom she had talked that afternoon. If Sinclair could have known her conclusions, he would have been well content.

XVI

SERGEANT WHATISNAME

BUT Sinclair did not know. Perhaps at that moment he was not thinking much about her. He was just entering on his long night's work among the wounded. Every power of mind was concentrated on the problem of those pain-racked human beings and how to relieve their sufferings.

And yet ever and anon, when he had finished an operation and his mind relaxed as his hands almost mechanically followed the familiar process of bandaging, a picture floated before his eyes. It was only a transparency, through which he could see every line of the brown limb or body he was binding up with care. But it was as clear to him as though it had been done on canvas by the brush of a painter. It was the picture of a proudly-carried head, with a crown of brown hair, a beautiful oval face with rich colour, dark violet eyes dancing with fun, and full red lips parted in a teasing laugh, which made the hot blood tingle in his face at the very memory of it.

As the days passed by he had more time to think of that face. The first strenuous days over, the pressure on his time and strength relaxed somewhat. A number of the greatest sufferers died. But in the majority of cases the singular toughness and marvellous recuperative power of the Chinese seconded his skilful surgery. Many a man who, if he had belonged to any Western nation, would have been invalided home,

never to be able to rejoin the colours, in ten days or two weeks' time left the hospital and returned to his regiment. There were but few wounded being brought in. The French were unable to advance beyond the shore line. The Chinese were unable to dislodge the French from the foothold they had obtained. Consequently, for nearly a month after the bombardment there was little fighting.

The weather, though exceedingly hot, was not unhealthy. In any case, those who might be sick preferred to go to their own doctors for medical treatment. While they acknowledged the superiority of the foreigner in surgery, they unhesitatingly maintained that their own physicians were unequalled in their knowledge of medicine.

The most common disease was the ever-present malarial fever. It was caused by two devils—the negative devil who industriously fanned the victim to give him chills and the positive devil who worked a furnace overtime to give him his spells of fever. As the foreign surgeon was a stranger to the country and supposed to have little acquaintance with those diligent devils, the preference was given to the incantations of native priests or the indescribable decoctions of native doctors.

As a result, Sinclair's duties had grown lighter every day. The service, which at first had taxed to the utmost even his splendid strength and vigour, had become less and less arduous, until, except for the necessity of living on native food, he had come to look upon it as a sort of picnic. Most of the dressings and all the preliminary examinations of new cases he was able to leave to his assistants. Dr. MacKay had gone to visit his converts at various places where bands

of freebooters, taking advantage of the disturbed state of the country, had thrown themselves upon the defenceless Christians, robbing, maltreating, torturing, and sometimes putting to death. But he left behind his student companions, whose knowledge of dressing wounds and giving simple treatments and acting the part of nurses, relieved the surgeon of much of his burden.

But it was principally on Sergeant Gorman that he had learned to rely. Every day revealed some new capability in that versatile Irishman. It was, however, in drilling and instructing an ambulance brigade that his capability was most evident. He was a master of the art of teaching men any form of military drill. But he was more than that. He was a born leader of men. Sinclair marvelled at the rapidity with which these uncouth, chattering Chinese peasants, who never by any accident had kept step for a dozen paces, and who never ceased their jabbering at any command given by their own officers, were reduced to silence and mastered squad and stretcher drill. They were raw material to begin with. Some of them were worse. The Chinese officers had drafted into this service some of the roughest characters in their regiments, to be rid of them. Yet these, who were accustomed to threaten to shoot their own officers when an unwelcome command was given, gave absolute and prompt obedience to this red-headed foreign devil, whom they had never seen till a few days before, who spoke their language imperfectly, and carried no weapon save a bit of a withe he had cut for a swagger-stick.

As Sinclair looked on he could not help but wonder at the shortsightedness and snobbery in the Brit-

ish army, which made officers of callow youths who knew nothing of war or leadership, and many of whom never would, and refused a commission to a man like this, whose mastery of men amounted to genius.

The middle of the month had passed. It was drawing towards sunset of a hot August day. The two men who had already grown into a fast friendship were out where the courtyard of their improvised hospital opened on the bank of the river. One of the wings and a clump of bamboos sheltered them from the still ardent rays of the sun. The evening breeze was just beginning to breathe along the river.

Dr. Sinclair was stretched on a long, bamboo reclining chair, which had been sent him from the headquarters of General Liu Ming-chuan. His hands were clasped behind his head. He was looking up at the sky, where an occasional fleck of cloud was changing from white to gold and crimson in the light of the sunset. In his white trousers, white canvas shoes, white negligée shirt, open at the neck, and with the shadow of a smile playing about his eyes and mouth, he looked the very personification of whole-hearted content. Sergeant Gorman was sitting opposite to him on a camp-chair of his own construction, smoking a short dudeen.

That afternoon General Liu Ming-chuan, accompanied by his staff, had paid a visit of inspection to their hospital. With a frankness and candour which could not be misunderstood, he had commended the work they had done, and on his own behalf and that of China had thanked them for their services. While his visit and appreciation were pleasant to them personally, it meant more than that. Henceforth

there was to be no more of the open opposition they had experienced from the native doctors and priests, and even from some of the officers. It was no wonder that Sinclair was feeling well content.

"Do you know, Gorman, this job suits me fine. If I could get a permanent sit at something like this, with enough salary to live decently, I think I could be happy."

"An' if you do," replied Gorman, dropping back into the brogue as he always did when he was in good-humour, whether fighting or chatting with a friend—"an' if you do, wud you jist kape me in moind as your furst assistant?"

"That I would," replied Sinclair. "I do not know how I should get along without you."

"Begorra, an' it's glad I am to hear you say so; for it's more p'ace of moind I have here than iver I've had since the furst toime me mother-in-law came to bliss me home wid her prisince—since she furst beamed upon us like the sun thr'u' a gatherin' storm."

"The only thing which catches me here is the grub. I do not like this Chinese chow."

"Faith thin, it seems to like you."

"How's that?"

"You're gettin' fat on it."

"Do you really think so?"

"Bedad and I don't think so. I'm sure of it."

Sinclair solicitously tested the tightness of his belt; lazily raised himself and examined it to find out at what hole it was buckled.

"Afraid you're wrong this time, Gorman. Not getting it round the waist, anyway. Buckled in the same hole and not a bit tighter than before."

"Thin you're gettin' it round the jaws of you.

Cheeks and double chin loike a howly father starvin' in Lent."

"Surely it's not so bad as that! I'll have to get more exercise. Nothing like training to keep down flesh. Run four or five miles of a morning. That's what will do it."

"Bedad thin, if that's thrue, that American gineral the Chinese have must have run all the way from Ameriky. Did iver you clap your two eyes on such a split-the-wind?"

"He sure is thin," replied Sinclair in the idiom of his native land. "As we used to say in Canada, he'd be handy to send on an errand down a pump."

"Faith," replied the Irishman, determined not to be beaten in exaggeration, "the pump would need to have a good valve or he'd leak out."

"You have it," laughed Sinclair. "I'll quit."

"Now, what do you make of him, anyway?"

"New England Yankee by his twang. Vermont by his build. Been in the South by his pronunciation of some words. But when he swears Montana is written all over him."

"Now, if that isn't divilish cliver of you to spot him loike that! Now, isn't it? But did ever you hear such a name? Silas Z. Leatherbottom! Be the powers, if I had a name loike that, I'd change it or die in the attempt. Silas Z. Leatherbottom!"

"It would have been a mighty handy name to have had when you were under the Wallopin' Master," retorted Sinclair.

"Whisht now, docther dear. It's unfeelin' of you to call up painful memories. May the saints forgive me, but I cannot sit comfortable an' think of him."

Sinclair's boyish, care-free laugh rang out as Gor-

man left his camp-stool and began to pace restlessly up and down, making grimaces and gestures, half vengeful, half humorous.

"Be the powers of Knocktopher, but it wud be a pleasure jist to be twishtin' this bit of a shtick about the big body of him. The yells of him wud be the sw'atest music in me ears, barrin' always the lament at me mother-in-law's wake."

"Egskews me, gentlemen" (with a marked emphasis on the "me"). "Egskews me for intrewding on yewr private deliberations. But I had a leetle proposition to make to one of yew gentlemen, an' I reckoned thet yew wouldn't object to me droppin' in on yew t' talk it over."

"Certainly not, General Leatherbottom," replied Sinclair, rising to receive him. "We are delighted to have you call. Have a seat."

Sergeant Gorman had clapped his swagger-stick under his left arm, clicked his heels together, stood at attention, and saluted as if by instinct.

"Naow, by the Jumpin' Jemina, thet's what I call neatly done. Thet's whar yew Britishers get away on us. When it comes to fightin' we kin fight. Don't take no second place to ennybody I ever met, an' I've met some few in my time. But when it comes to takin' Indians or niggers or Chinks in hand, lickin' them into shape, an' teachin' them haow to fight civilized thet's whar you've got us beat to a stand-still."

He was a tall man, a very tall man, two or three inches over six feet. But he was narrow-shouldered, slab-sided, and marvellously thin. His small head seemed lost in a great cavern of a sun-helmet. A long, faded, yellow moustache drooped over the hollow cheeks and angular jaws. He sat down on the prof-

fered camp-chair, hitching a holster containing a huge .44 Colt round a little more to one side, to allow him to sit back with comfort. His legs were so long that his knees stuck up at an acute angle. When he threw one over the other, they were so thin that they seemed to twine around each other in serpentine fashion.

He accepted a pipe, lighted it, leaned forward with one sharp elbow on a sharp knee, the hand helping to hold the pipe in his mouth as he talked. The other arm was across his knee and the long, bony hand hanging down.

"Ef yew gentlemen will egskews me, I'll make my proposition, an' we'll perceed to bizness. But fust I'd like t' give yew a leetle of my auttybiography, so's yew'll understand the sityewation."

With many quaint oaths and ingenious expletives, he told how he had served as a private in a Vermont infantry regiment in the Civil War, had been wounded and taken prisoner. After the war he had drifted into the cavalry and been engaged in Indian wars in the Dakotas and Montana. He was with Benteen's companies when Custer and his three hundred were massacred by the Sioux under Sitting Bull and Crazy Horse. Then he had turned miner, and after much experience in the Black Hills, as well as in Montana and Idaho, had drifted to Formosa and had been engaged in developing gold workings but a little distance from where they sat when the war broke out.

"An' naow, gentlemen, I'm a general of brigade in the service of His Imperial Majesty of China, gettin' 's much dust in a month 's I could in a year of minin'. An' thet's why I am fur the time bein' a dewtiful subject of His Imperial Bigness.

"Mebbe yew'll b'lieve me, I hev seen sum fightin'.

An' I ain't partiklar ef I see sum more. An' I hev idears whar t' plant an army, an' haow t' plan a defence or lay a trap. But this bizness of drillin' Chinks so's they'll walk t'gether, an' shoot t'gether, and dew what they're told without all talkin' at once like the sisters at a meetin'-house sewin'-bee, an' all gettin' tied up into a gol-durned tarnation tangle, thet's what knocks the spots off yewrs trewly.

"Naow, gentlemen, my proposition is thet the sergeant here jest step over with me to General Liew, an' take service with him till the end of the war. The general was mighty pleased with thet ar ambulance corpse of yourn. He'd make you a kurnel, second in command of a brigade. An' the spondoolix! Lots of it! Got it to burn! More'n a candidate for congress at election time! Money don't count with him, no haow. Ef yew lick these ar Chinks into fightin' shape, I'll plan the campaign an' we'll whale those *parley-voos* into the sea in no time. Then we'll get a concession an' the gold mine. Naow, what dew yew think of thet?"

"That sounds pretty good, sergeant," said Sinclair. "It looks like a chance for you."

"Thet's what I call a putty payin' proposition. Will yew take it?"

"Thank you, sir; I think not."

Leatherbottom opened his small, light-blue eyes as wide as the cavernous depths of their sockets would allow, removed the pipe from his mouth, and spat far out into the river:

"Naow, will yew tell me haow it is thet yew will not take on a payin' proposition like thet? Dew yew forget the spondoolix?"

"I do not, sir."

"Then, will yew tell me why?"

"I have fought for twenty-four years under one flag. There is only one other that I would fight under."

"I presyewme thet is the stars and stripes, the flag of the Yew.S.A.?"

"It is not, sir."

"Then, will yew tell me what flag it is?" asked the general in evident surprise.

"The green flag with the golden harp, the flag of a self-governing Ireland!"

"But there ain't no army 'lowed to carry sech a flag."

"Then, till there is, I'll still fight under the old flag and the old queen I have served more than half my life."

"An' yew air an' Irishman?"

"Yes, sir."

"An' a Roman Catholic?"

"I am, sir."

"Wall—I'll—be—gol—durned!"

Sergeant Gorman's moustache and eyebrows fairly bristled. The little, shrewd blue eyes of the Indian fighter were quick to notice it:

"Egskews me, sergeant; I ain't meant no offence. 'Twas only thet I had been informed thet the Irish will hev a Fourth-of-July celebration the day the Yewnion Jack gits out of thet ar island fur good."

"Then you were misinformed, sir."

"Wall, I reckon it's a case of live an' l'arn. When I was t' hum I thought the Yew.S.A. were putty near the hull thing. When I came out here I putty soon found out they warn't. When I was in our country, a-listenin' to the politicians, I thought every Irishman

was jest thirstin' fur the blood of the English. I came out here an' naow yew tell me they ain't. Will you egskews me? I hev sum things t' l'arn yet."

"Certainly, sir. We all make mistakes."

"Thank yew. But why yew'd refewse t' change yewr flag when yew knew thet the spondoolix was sure, thet beats me. Oh, wall, I reckon every man has his own way of lookin' at things. Say, doctor, whar's the elder?"

"Do you mean Dr. MacKay?"

"Sartin."

"Oh, he left several days ago to visit some of his converts. I guess the heathen have been roughing things a bit and making it hot for the Christians. He went to see if he could help them out."

"Do he carry weepons?"

"I believe not."

"Wall, thet beats all. I've seen some putty nervy things. I've seen whar Custer an' his three hundred rode slap-bang into Sittin' Bull an' his red devils on the Little Big Horn, an' got skulped, every man of them. But they hed guns an' hed a chance. But t' go out among these ar yellow heathen, when they're rampagin' fur the blood of furriners, without so much 's even a .32 t' put the fear of God into them, thet's what I call temptin' Providence. It's givin' Providence a chance t' let them dew their durndest and save itself the trubble of interferin'."

The sun had gone down and the moon had taken its place, riding in silver radiance across the cloudless sky. General Leatherbottom rose to go. Sinclair and Gorman accompanied him through the hospital to the street door. A squad of the sergeant's ambulance corps, who were on guard, presented arms

with the precision and unity of European veterans.

With democratic freedom the general thrust his long, bony hand first into Sinclair's, then into Gorman's:

"Never seen the beat of thet ambulance corpse of yourn, fur the time yew've had 'em. But, by the Jumpin' Jemina, I'd like to hev seen yew lickin' the regiments of my brigade into shape."

XVII

WOLVES AND THEIR PREY

THE end of August found the French and Chinese in the same state of impasse. As a consequence there was little bloodshed, and few wounded were being brought into the hospital. If it had not been for the shocking carelessness of the Chinese in handling firearms and explosives, there would have been almost none. Time began to hang somewhat heavy on the hands of Dr. Sinclair and his assistant.

"Getting mighty slow here," he remarked to Gorman one day.

"Slower than promotion for merit in the service," was the reply.

"You haven't it so bad. You can always amuse yourself drilling 'that ambulance corpse of yourn,' as General Leatherbottom calls it."

"Divil a bit! There's nothin' more for me to t'ache thim. Tuk till it loike ducks to wather. Can imitate me till if they were wanst in service outfit I'd swear it was the multiplication table of meself a-marchin' down the road."

Sinclair laughed.

"That's just what I've been noticing," he said. "When you took hold of them every man jack toed in. Now they all turn their toes out at a little more than an angle of forty-five degrees, just as you do. And right down to that little spindly chap, twenty-five

inches around the hips, they all strut as if they were as broad in the beam as yourself."

"Bedad thin, I'm not the only wan! It's the same wid your bhoys inside. They're jist reduced copies of yourself. They bate Banagher for imitation."

"Suppose we leave those fellows to look after things for a couple of days and run over to Tamsui while business is slack. If things were to brighten up a bit here, we might not get another chance."

"Faith, an' I'm wid you. But, begorra, we had better see to it that each of us has a bit of a shtick an' a gun handy. I hear that there are disthurbances iverywhere, an' it's little manners the haythen are showin' to Europeans since the Frinch shtarted to mix it up wid thim."

"The last time he passed, Dr. MacKay told me that there was a good deal of rioting and some murdering. But he seemed to go about his work as if it were perfectly safe. And, so far as I could find out, he never carries any weapons."

"May the saints preserve him, that is a man! I was born a Roman Catholic, an' I intind to die a Roman Catholic. But, if it was advice about me sowl's salvation I was wantin'—and betune you an' me I'm needin' it badly enough—it's to him I'd go rather than to a church full of the priests that are feedin' fat on me paternal estate."

Their arrangements were soon made, and they were off. Even on the much-travelled way between the camp before Keelung and the capital there were evidences of disorder and lawlessness. Bands of marauders were out. Many of them were well armed, as they included numbers of irregular levies who had deserted with the arms and ammunition with which they had

been supplied when they enlisted. Wayfarers had been robbed, and some who resisted had been murdered. Lonely farmhouses were looted and burned. In some cases the men were killed and the women foully abused. Some considerable towns had been attacked and terrorized into paying tribute.

But it was on the native Christians that the heaviest blow fell. Nearly everywhere they were hounded down, their little churches were destroyed, their houses were ransacked, their goods pillaged, and themselves cruelly beaten and tortured. Even when they succeeded in reaching hiding-places, they were often betrayed by their own relatives and given over to the inhuman cruelties of the heathen.

So serious was the danger that the consul issued a warning to his nationals and those of other nations for whom he acted not to venture beyond the limits of the port, where they could be under the protection of the gunboat, as well as of the Chinese garrison. At that moment Dr. MacKay, Sinclair, and Gorman were the only white men who were outside of the protection of large forces of disciplined soldiers.

Several times on their way Sinclair and his companion were faced by armed men. But they moved resolutely forward. As the marauders opened up to let them pass Sinclair caught the word "I-seng" (the life-healer), while Gorman laughed to hear himself described as "Añg-mñg-kui" (the red-haired devil). Their reputations had preceded them and stood them in good stead.

Elsewhere tragedies were being enacted. Five or six miles south of the road which they were travelling, nestling in among the foothills of the great mountain-chain which occupied all the centre of the

island, was the prosperous town of Sin-tiam. There the missionary had gathered together a congregation of worshippers and built a church of unplastered stone.

With the eye for beauty in nature which characterized him, he had chosen a site at one end of the town, where a little dell smiled between some verdured hills and the river. In front of the church door lay a beach of shingle, round which curved the swift, clear green waters of the Sin-tiam River. Its farther bank rose steeply from the water's edge, a hillside luxuriant with trees and vines, ferns and grasses, their vivid green all starred with roses and morning-glories, or the massed beauties of myrtle-trees and honeysuckle. Behind the first abrupt hill rose higher hills, and beyond these mountains, in whose impenetrable jungles and savage retreats the wild head-hunters had their home. Behind these again giant peaks towered into the heavens.

Into this paradise of beauty, bloodthirsty, heathen men burst and their rage turned it into a perdition. Early one fair summer morning the black flags of a party of marauders were seen approaching the town. The respectable citizens, whether heathen or Christian, hurriedly closed and barricaded their shops and houses. The worst element of the population rushed out to join the freebooters.

Like a pack of hungry wolves they entered the town on the run, yelling, screaming, beating drums, blowing horns, firing their guns. It was evident that they had a concerted plan, for they did not halt, but with yelp and yell and animal snarl they swept through to the far end, where the Christian church was situated. They poured into the native preach-

er's house, which adjoined the church. It was deserted. At the first alarm some of the Christians had rushed to the church, and hurried their pastor and his family by a circuitous route to a safe hiding-place. They knew that he would be the first victim. They hoped that their own obscurity would be their protection.

After a vain search for the preacher, the black-flags returned to loot his house and destroy everything they could not carry away. Then they began to search for other victims. Unfortunately in their haste the pastor and his friends had forgotten the roll of church members, which was in the drawer of the desk on the church platform. It was the death warrant of some of the flock.

With yells of savage delight the persecutors tore it open and began to read out the names:

"Lee Soon!"

He was a tolerably well-to-do merchant. At the mention of his name the mob scented plunder, and the most active fairly fought with one another in the rush to be foremost for the spoil. Lee Soon had sent his wife and daughter to a hiding-place in a forsaken mine in the neighbourhood. With his young son he remained to take care of his property. On the first assault of the mob he tried to parley with them and offered them gifts if they would leave him unmolested.

"Do you think that we would take part when we intend to get all?" was the jeering reply.

"We'll have no parley with friends of the foreign devils," yelled others.

All the while a rain of bricks and stones fell on the barricades he had hastily put up. Others climbed

on the roof and tore off the tiles. In a short time a breach was made and they rushed in. Lee Soon was seized by the hair and dragged out over the piles of bricks and rubbish. Every one who could get a kick at him, a blow with a bamboo pole or the butt of a gun, gave it with insensate fury. At last he lay bleeding and unconscious in the midst of the street. But the mob still trampled upon him.

"Now will you go into the barbarian's religion?" cried one.

"Where is your God now?" shrieked another.

Meanwhile others were stripping the house and shop of its contents. Others still were searching high and low for the women of the household. Enraged at not finding them, they dragged out his son, Lee Ien, a mere youth, kicking and beating him as they had done his father.

"He has given his sisters to the foreign devils."

"Might as well give them to the beasts, for the foreign devils are the offspring of beasts."

"We'll teach him to give the women of our country to foreign devils."

Dragging the unfortunate youth to a tree, they threw the end of his long braid of hair over a branch and pulled until he was lifted off the ground. Then they spit on him, jeered him, and prodded him with their poles, making his body swing to and fro.

"Now will you forsake this Jesus faith and go back to the gods of your ancestors?"

Around his neck and from various parts of the torn scalp blood was oozing and trickling down. The body writhed in agony. The youth, really only a boy in years, was alone, ringed round by foes. From the drawn, quivering lips came the prayer:

"Lord Jesus Christ, help me! Jehovah God, give me strength!"

A wild yell arose from another part of the town. More victims had been found. There was more loot. Those who had been torturing Lee Ien were anxious to get a share. They released their hold on his hair and rushed off with the others. He fell in a limp heap on the ground.

With the physical toughness of his race, he soon recovered and hurried to where he had last seen his father. He found that a heathen neighbour, more pitiful than the rest, had carried him into a place of safety and had brought him back to consciousness.

Tan Siong had escaped, but came back to help some of his fellow-believers. He accomplished this and effected their escape. But it was by sacrificing himself. He was caught, and being a man of some prominence special tortures were devised. Sharp-edged splits of bamboo were placed between the fingers of both hands. Cords were wound tightly around the fingers, pressing the angles of the bamboo into the flesh.

"Will you forsake the black-bearded foreign devil?"

"Pastor MacKay has never done me anything but good. He healed me when I was sick. He saved my son's life when he had the fever. Why should I forsake him?"

The cords were drawn more tightly. The blood oozed out around his nails and along the edges of the bamboo.

"Will you give up the barbarian's religion and go back to the gods our ancestors worshipped from of old?"

" The gods our ancestors worshipped are only idols. They cannot see or hear or understand our prayers. I cannot go back to them. I believe in Jehovah God, maker of heaven and earth——"

A rifle butt fell with a sickening thud on his head and, with the blood still oozing from his finger-tips, Tan Siong lay senseless on the earth. His tormentors rushed off to find other victims to rob and maltreat.

So the morning wore away. There were about forty families of Christians. Probably the majority of the individuals in them escaped with their lives, and by keeping in hiding did not suffer torture. But all lost their possessions. Many were put to the test of indescribable physical agony. Yet they did not deny their faith.

There were two, a man and his wife, so humble that they thought they might be overlooked. They could not flee. They were both between sixty and seventy years of age. The wife's feet, crushed and broken by being bound for a lifetime, would not bear her in flight. Her husband, with a devotion rare in a Chinese and the more beautiful because of its rarity, determined to stay with her and meet his fate, whatever it might be. They hoped that their insignificance might save them.

But Lim Tsu had for many years been a maker of idols. Then he had lost faith in those gilded bits of wood or plaster he had so long offered to others to worship. He had heard strange words from some native Christians. Then he had heard them from the lips of the foreign pastor. After long hesitation he gave up the beliefs of his fathers, gave up the practices of a lifetime, what was harder still, gave up the means of a livelihood, and accepted the Christian

faith. From that hour Lim Tsu was a marked man. He was the worst of renegades.

His name and that of his wife, Oo-a, were nearly the last upon the communion roll, for they had been but recently received. When they were read out a howl like that of a pack of wild beasts went up from the mob, and with one consent they flocked pell-mell towards the humble cottage of the former image-maker. He heard them coming, and with his aged wife met them outside the door. Was it something in the calm demeanour of the old couple, standing quietly there with the summer sun shining on their whitening heads, which awed them? The ones in front paused, irresolute. Those behind pressed them forward.

"Friends, whom do you seek?"

"Lim Tsu, the idol-maker."

"Lim Tsu, the idol-maker, is not here. But Lim Tsu, the worshipper of the living God, is here. Friends, I am Lim Tsu."

The leaders of the mob quailed before the quiet dignity of the old man. But the crowd behind pressed them on. They held a hurried consultation while the old Christian and his wife stood quietly waiting.

They were seized by the arms and led towards the river. The spot chosen was the beach of clean shingle in front of the church. Unlike the other prisoners who had been taken that day, they were not beaten. But the feeble old woman hobbled painfully over the stones. Her husband encouraged her:

"If they drown us, it will not take long. Just a moment and it will all be over. Then we'll not be old any more. Your feet will not pain you any longer.

I'll not have the fever. We'll not have to worry about getting rice to eat. Just a moment and all these things will be forgotten. In heaven there is no suffering."

As their feet touched the edge of the water they were halted. One of the leaders said to them:

"Lim Tsu, you used to make images of the gods. You used to worship the spirits of your ancestors. You used to perform the rites as our fathers have done since ages eternal. But now in your old age you have been bewitched by the foreign devils and joined the Jesus belief. If you leave the barbarian's religion and go back to the faith of your fathers, it will be well. You will be safe and men will honour you. If you do not, we will drown you both."

"Friends," came the quiet, firm reply, "I do not believe in idols. I made them for many years. I know that they are only wood or stone or earth or plaster. I know that I can knock them down and break them, or throw them into the fire and burn them. How could they help me? Now I worship the true God, who made the earth and the sea and the sky, who made us all, for we are His children. And I worship Jesus Christ, His Son, whom He sent into the world to save me. You may drown us if you will. But we will not give up the Jesus belief."

Yells of rage burst from their persecutors. They were pushed forward into the water up to their knees. Again the offer was made, and again refused.

Execrations, foul language, inarticulate screams of rage rose from the throng on the bank. The old couple were pushed farther into the stream. The water had risen to the old man's arm-pits. It was up to the woman's throat. Again they were halted.

"Lim Tsu and Oo-a, his wife, will you give up the Jesus belief? If not, we will drown you."

The old woman's thin treble rose in answer:

"I cannot give up the Jesus belief. Jesus is my Saviour."

"You may drown us if you will," answered her husband. "That will not hurt us much. It will soon be over. But we can never deny the Lord Jesus."

For a few moments the mob-leaders paused. They were plainly nonplussed by such constancy. Even the rabble on the bank hushed their howling.

Oo-a's grey head swam on the surface of the clear green stream. She turned her face upward. Before her were the steep green hills, thick with trees and ferns and grasses, and all starred with flowers, on which she had looked since her childhood. A bird sang in the thicket. The cicadas shrilled ceaselessly in the hot sunshine. All the world was at peace. Why was man so cruel? She lifted her eyes to the blue sky which bent over her. Her thin tremulous voice was heard in prayer:

"Pe Siong-te." *—"Father God, help a weak old woman. Make her strong to confess her Lord. For Jesus' sake."

Then the old man lifted up his voice, and she joined him in that immortal prayer which ever circles the world around and runs through all time:

"Goan ê Pe ti thî nih." †—"Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name, Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done——"

Their voices were silenced by the waters. Their captors had plunged them under and held them there.

* Pronounced, Pay Seeong-tay.
† Pronounced, Go-an ā Pay tee thee neeh.

The fair flowers still bloomed on the high bank. The birds sang on. The cicadas shrilled their monotonous melody. The sun poured down its wealth and bounty on the evil and on the good. Only a few bubbles rising to the surface told where the souls of the two martyrs had been set free to go home to God.

Just plain, ignorant old Chinese peasants! Alone amidst their enemies, all unknown and unknowing, unsupported by and unthinking of the world's applause! Yet without a murmur they died for their faith. Even an Apostle Paul could do no more.

XVIII

TO THE RESCUE

TWO days later Dr. Sinclair and Sergeant Gorman were nearing the capital on their way from Keelung to Tamsui. Sometimes they talked and laughed. Sometimes they walked in silence, one following the other along the narrow trail, each busy with his own thoughts. Sinclair was thinking of a perplexing, teasing young woman of queenly stature and bearing, with eyes and mouth which haunted him in spite of his determination to persuade himself that he was unconcerned. He knew that she was still in Tamsui. McLeod had sent him a note the last time the *Hailoong* was in port. Mr. MacAllister had made trips to various ports on the mainland, and to South Formosa. But his wife and daughter remained at Tamsui in the congenial company and care of Mr. and Mrs. Beauchamp.

Sinclair wondered to himself in what humour he would find this wayward maiden who had so suddenly been projected into his life, and now occupied so large a place in his thoughts. Why was she so capricious with him? She was not like that with others. With Captain Whiteley or McLeod or Mr. Beauchamp she was amiability itself. Apparently she treated Carteret quite differently from him. Even with himself there had been moments when she had been cordial and kind. In those brief spells of friendliness she was irresistibly fascinating.

But most of the time she seemed to bend all her energies to making him feel uncomfortable. Why did she do it? Was it possible that McLeod was right? Or was it that his approaches were disagreeable to her and she was trying to make him keep his distance? That was much more likely. But he would find out. He was not going to make a fool of himself by pushing himself in where he was not wanted. He closed his teeth firmly. His lower jaw was set and stern. He would find out this time. He would either make or mend it.

But he did not.

He had hardly made the aforementioned resolution when it and even the object of his thoughts were driven out of his mind altogether. From a high bank beside the road, covered with a thicket of bamboo, a native boy of fourteen or fifteen years dropped into the middle of the pathway at Sinclair's feet. His face was drawn with fear. His eyes had a strained, hunted look. Without any of the customary salutations, he poured forth a stream of nervous, fluent Chinese, in which Sinclair could catch nothing but his own title of "I-seng" and "Kai Bok-su" (Pastor MacKay).

"Here, Gorman, can you make anything out of what he says? There is evidently trouble somewhere, and Dr. MacKay is in it."

"Hould on, boy! Go aisy! Fwhat the divil wud you expect a Christian man to make out of such a jabber as that?"

Then in Chinese:

"You talk too fast. Speak slowly. Don't be afraid. If there is any trouble, we'll help you out."

Getting a grip of himself, the excited boy told them that he was the son of one of the Christians of Sin-tiam. He related the events of two days before. He said that Dr. MacKay had heard of what had taken place and, in spite of the pleadings of his converts, had insisted on going to the help of those who were still in danger. He was already there, and if the black-flags caught him they would assuredly kill him. He, the boy, had been sent out to look for some Chinese troops, but had found them instead. Would they come to Pastor MacKay's rescue?

"Begorra, an' that we will!" exclaimed Gorman, as he gave his heavy stick a couple of fancy twirls around his head, felt for his revolver to assure himself that it was there, and plunged into the carrier coolie's basket to get more cartridges.

"Tell the coolie to go on to Taipeh and wait for us there. Tell this boy to guide us to Sin-tiam by the shortest route. He needn't try to hide us. We don't care if those devils do see us."

Sinclair spoke in sharp, incisive tones. Instinctively the sergeant came to attention and saluted. It was the accent of command.

In another moment they had left the main road, which they had been following, plunged through the bamboos, and headed directly south. Soon their guide picked up a blind pathway which zigzagged through a labyrinth of rice-fields, dropped into shady ravines, or climbed a projecting spur of rock. The afternoon sun blazed down upon them. But with relentless energy they pressed on. Peasants working in their fields uttered loud cries of wonder, not unmixed with alarm, as the two foreigners strode silently, determinedly past. The native boy never ceased

from his steady run. The long, powerful strides of the two whites pressed continually on his heels.

The day was wearing on as they drew near their destination. The by-path they were following did not join the main road entering the town, but led over some wooded hills nearly at right angles to the principal highway. While still unable to see the town, they heard wild yells and occasional shots. Their rapid walk quickened into a run.

As they came over the last bluff, through an opening in the shrubbery they could see the end of the town where the main road entered it. Just emerging from between the houses was a man dressed in white and wearing a sun-helmet. It was MacKay. He was walking steadily, resolutely out along the road which led towards the capital. Behind him, in close but irregular order, was a band of natives—men, women, and children. Among them were a few sedan chairs, evidently carrying aged and wounded. Pressing upon their rear, crowding upon them on either side, threatening to block the road in front, was a screaming, jeering, cursing mob. Black flags were waving over their heads; guns were discharged; mud and filth were thrown; howls like those of beasts of prey burst from them in chorus.

The situation was obvious. MacKay had appealed to the Chinese authorities at the capital to protect the Christians. They had replied that they could not protect them in outlying districts like Sin-tiam, but would protect them if they came to the capital, where there was a garrison. He was endeavouring to bring the survivors to where their lives would be safe. They had lost their homes, their property, their church.

They had only their lives left. He was trying to save these.

But the mob were determined that they should not escape. They crowded closer and closer on the native Christians, but still opened up before the missionary. His cool, resolute demeanour, the instinctive recognition of unruffled courage and conscious superiority made them give way. As the little band passed out of the town they began to fear that their prey was going to give them the slip. Bricks and stones were flung. Jostling passed into interchange of blows. Shouts of "Kill the barbarian. He is not very big. Tear the foreign devil in pieces" mingled with inarticulate yells of rage.

Suddenly with a surge from behind the mob flung themselves like wolves on their prey. The Christian maidens, always the first victims, were being dragged away, their terror-stricken shrieks mingling with the fiendish yells of their captors. Sedan chairs were overturned. Men and women were beaten down. The hopelessly outnumbered Christians were fighting desperately for their lives.

At the first sound of the onslaught, MacKay turned back. He would save his people or share their fate. The muzzle of a rifle was jabbed against his chest. Like a flash he thrust it up with his left hand and it was discharged harmlessly past his ear.

It was the last time that Chinese freebooter ever pulled a trigger. Simultaneously with the explosion of the rifle Sinclair's stick came down on his head and cracked his skull like an eggshell.

The same instant, with a wild "Hurroosh!" Gorman was into the mêlée. MacKay's Highland blood was up, too. Alongside of his bigger and heavier com-

panions he was proving that his slight, sinewy frame had not for nothing gone through more than a dozen years of strenuous training in that tropic clime.

For a few minutes it was rough-and-tumble fighting, with foot and fist and shillelagh. Friends and foes were so mixed together that Sinclair and Gorman were afraid to use their revolvers. But the terror those big, fiercely-fighting foreigners inspire in the hearts of a Chinese mob fell on the rioters. They loosed their holds on their prey and fled in wild disorder, hurried by the barking of the two revolvers and the fall of some in whom the bullets had found their mark.

"Thank you, Dr. Sinclair; Sergeant Gorman. You have done me, and you have done my poor people, a great service."

"It seems that we did happen to come at the right time," replied Sinclair.

"You didn't happen. God sent you."

"Perhaps that is the right way to put it, Dr. MacKay. At any rate, we are glad to have been here. Now we must look at those people. I am afraid that some of them are pretty badly hurt."

All three turned their attention to caring for the sufferers and to making them as comfortable as possible. When they reached the capital Sinclair found it necessary to remain there several days to care for some who were most seriously injured.

Before he felt free to leave them to make his intended trip to Tamsui word came that there had been some sharp skirmishes around Keelung and a considerable number had been wounded. So he and Gorman turned back to duty.

This was the reason why he did not at that time

succeed in making or mending his relations with Miss MacAllister. Perhaps it was better for him that it was so. His exploit in coming to the rescue of MacKay was likely to stand him in better stead than a premature demand for explanations.

But Sinclair did not know that. He was not versed in the ways of women. Like most men in love, if he had been allowed his own way, he would have made a mess of it. When Providence came to his rescue and sent him back to Keelung without seeing Miss MacAllister, he was inclined to fall out with Providence.

But his sense of duty and his habitual good-humour prevailed. And when he saw again the strained, eager looks of the wounded men, saw hope come into their faces as the word passed from lip to lip, " I-seng lâi " (the life-healer has come), he was glad that he had done his duty. He was at his chosen work.

XIX

ALLISTER

ON the morning of the 24th of September, Sinclair, looking down from a mountain height on the town and harbour of Keelung, saw one of the warships get up steam and put out to sea. Watching it with his glasses, he saw it heading north, and then west, till even the trailing smoke disappeared beyond the far blue coast line which curved away towards the northernmost point of the island.

"I'd give something to know where that Frenchman is heading for and what mischief he has in mind."

"Bedad, an' if he doesn't do more than he's been doin' here these last six weeks, he'd better give up the job."

"That's just the reason why I think that he may be intending to try his hand somewhere else. He can't do any more damage here without a land force. But there are other places where he could—Tamsui, for example."

"Begorra, an' if I thought there was goin' to be a shindy there, it's not one minute longer I'd spind kickin' me heels around this ould dead-an'-alive camp. I'd be makin' for Tamsui as fast as the two legs of me cud carry me."

"So would I. But there doesn't seem to be any movement among the rest of the fleet. We'll just keep a sharp lookout and perhaps we'll get some word from Tamsui. If there's anything doing there, I'm

blamed if I am going to be stewed up here and miss the fun."

Two days later Sinclair was again at his lookout. From the departure of that first French warship which had steamed away to the west, either he or Gorman had kept a constant watch on the movements of the French fleet. Perhaps it was all because of his anxiety to be where he was most needed. Perhaps there were other reasons which he did not mention to Sergeant Gorman.

He had found a shady seat for himself beneath the wide-spreading fronds of a tree-fern, and through his glasses was carefully scanning the squadron of men-of-war in the harbour below. A footstep sounded on a rock near him. It was Gorman:

"A letter for you from Dr. MacKay. A boy has jist arrived wid it. I thought that you moight want to see it at wanst."

"Thank you, Gorman," he replied, tearing it open. "Just as we thought. He says that the *Château Renaud* arrived off Tamsui on Wednesday. . . . That's the day we saw her leave here. . . . Overhauled the *Welle* yesterday, and the *Hailoong,* too. . . . Then Mac's at Tamsui. Boys, but I'd like to see him! . . . Says that the consul has got a hint somewhere that the French are going to bombard Tamsui. . . . What did I tell you, Gorman? . . . Thinks we had better come back there at once and take his boys with us. . . . So do I. . . . Says your ambulance corps can take care of any wounded there are likely to be here. . . . Of course they can. Whether they can or not, I'm going."

"Another moving!" exclaimed Gorman, who had been using the glasses.

"What! By Jove, you're right!"

Sinclair was manifesting unwonted excitement.

"We'd better start at once if we want to get through this evening. Pretty nearly thirty miles of a walk if we should happen to miss the launch. I'd like to get there before the *Hailoong* sails. I want to see McLeod."

Gorman's left eye, which was invisible to Sinclair, winked and that side of his face assumed a most comical expression. The other eye looked straight out at the landscape, and the other side of his face was judicial in its seriousness. He was a man of some perception.

"An' you think that the hospital here will get along widout us?" he asked.

"Of course it will! I'm going to Tamsui."

"Faith and you're a man afther me own heart. Let the hospital go to Ballyhack. I'm wid you. . . . There she goes headin' for the west. The *parley-voos* are plottin' somethin' an' we want to be there whin it happens."

. . . . . .

Late that afternoon practically the whole foreign population of North Formosa and the officers of the *Locust* were gathered on the deck of the *Hailoong*. Captain Whiteley and McLeod were giving what they called their "Farewell At Home!" After their experience of the day before they were doubtful whether they would be allowed to enter the port again so long as the Frenchmen stayed.

It was perhaps the largest party of foreigners which had ever gathered in North Formosa. Consular, mission and custom staffs, merchants, the doctor, naval officers, visitors, and hosts, they numbered thirty or

more. The measure of uncertainty, the spice of a possible peril, added zest to their intercourse. Just out of sight over the projecting ridge of the hill to the north of the harbour, the *Château Renaud* was lying at anchor. That very day the long, low, sinister-looking *Vipère* had slipped into the very mouth of the harbour. She could be plainly seen from where they sat chatting and sipping their tea on the deck of the *Hailoong*. Every one felt that these engines of war were big with potentialities of danger and death.

As usual, since her arrival in Formosa, Miss MacAllister was the centre of attraction. Bald-headed seniors like De Vaux and Boville vied with young men like Carteret and mere youths like Lanyon for her company and her smiles. But for reasons best known to herself she chose to give those privileges in much the largest measure to McLeod. As one of the hosts he had not in any way tried to monopolize her. But she showed so marked a partiality for his companionship that it did appear as if he had the monopoly.

"It seems as if no person but a seaman has any show with the ladies to-day," said Carteret with that indefinable bitterness of tone which he so often used. It called attention to the fact that each of the ladies present was deep in conversation with an officer of one or other of the ships.

"By my faith, it can't be the sea which is the attraction," retorted Lieutenant Lanyon, "for none of them will look at me. In Miss MacAllister's case it is the clannishness of the Scotch," he continued, loud enough for her to hear. "If McLeod weren't a Mac, he'd have no more show than I have, and that's no show at all, at all."

He thought that he would draw her by his very boldness, as he had done on more than one occasion before. All the satisfaction he got was:

"Now, Mr. Lanyon, please do not let everybody on board know that you cannot get a lady to talk to you. There's mother. She has just finished her conversation with Captain Whiteley. I know that she will take pity on you."

Lanyon joined as heartily as the rest in the laugh at his own expense, and, accepting her suggestion, was soon amusing himself and Mrs. MacAllister with his boyish tales of adventures and scrapes in the navy.

Meanwhile Miss MacAllister was saying to McLeod:

"Really, Mr. McLeod, I do not know what some of these men are made of. To think that they could sit here doing the little routine work of their offices, with battles going on within twenty miles of them, and never so much as go to see what a battle is like! I wanted to go myself. But father and the consul wouldn't let me."

"You must remember, Miss MacAllister, that the majority of things which are called men are not men. They are only dressed up to look like men. When they get in danger or any other place which needs men, all the man in them disappears and there is nothing left but the clothes."

"But Dr. MacKay says that Dr. Sinclair and Sergeant Gorman have not been in any real danger since they went over there. He says that the Chinese respect them too much to molest them."

"Yes; but that is where the difference comes in. Sinclair is a man. So is Gorman. So is MacKay. The Chinese know it, and they are safe. But some

of the others—not all, only some—are not men. They wouldn't be safe."

"I wish that I were a man."

"If you were, I venture to say that you would be a soldier."

"I had a brother once. He was a soldier."

"I did not know that you ever had a brother. You never told me that."

By this time they had left the company on the forward deck and, walking away aft, were leaning on the rail. She was in a more subdued and meditative mood than McLeod had ever seen her before.

"No," she said, "I never told you. I rarely tell anybody. I do not know why I am telling you now."

McLeod listened in sympathetic silence. He knew that behind this fact of the brother of whom she seldom spoke there must be a tragedy. If she wished to tell him, he would listen. But if she did not, he would respect her reserve and not seek to pry into its privacy.

"My brother was an officer in a crack English cavalry regiment. He fought in Egypt and was mentioned in despatches after Tel-el-Kebir. But he was the only Scottish officer in the regiment, and the only son of a tradesman. The rest were Englishmen and sons of do-nothing aristocracy. They never ceased twitting Allister about being a Highland kern, and that his father was a shopkeeper, and had started life as an errand boy. The fact that he was mentioned in dispatches made them worse. They were jealous."

She paused for a moment. McLeod did not speak. She glanced at him. His face was set. One hand was clenched. The other gripped hard on the rail. She understood and went on:

"Two of them were especially insulting. At mess one evening they went beyond endurance. Allister was not quick with his tongue. He was slow of speech and could not answer them. But there was another way open, and he took it. He was big and strong, as big and strong as Dr. Sinclair. But not fair like Dr. Sinclair. He was dark like mother. He called the two of them out from mess, and with his bare hands gave the biggest of them a terrible thrashing. The other ran to his tent for his sword and revolver. When Allister went after him, for his Highland blood was up and nothing could stop him, the coward hid behind the excuse that they must fight as gentlemen. But when it came to fighting with revolvers, the Englishman who had been thrashed claimed that it was his right to fight the duel, as it was he who had been beaten. And the coward was glad to let him."

She paused again. Her face was pale, but her eyes showed the fire which burned within. McLeod was breathing hard, as if in a physical struggle.

"It was quickly arranged and quickly over. Out there on the sand in the moonlight they faced each other and fired only once. Allister was not hit. The Englishman was shot through the lung. The regimental doctor said that he could live only an hour. He could not check the flow of blood.

"A few minutes afterwards Allister rode out of camp towards Alexandria. His orderly, who was Highland like himself, brought us word that he could not stand the thought of what it would mean to father and mother and me, that he should be tried and convicted of murder. That was two years ago to-day. Since that we have never heard a word."

For the first time in her recital McLeod spoke:

"Did the Englishman die?"

"No, he did not. He is now strong and well. What is better, he bitterly repented the wrong he did my brother. He came to father and mother seeking our forgiveness, and was forgiven. Now he is helping to search the world for Allister. What became of the coward we never heard, except that he was dismissed from the service for cowardice. We never knew his name."

"That is the real reason why your father is spending so much time in those out-of-the-way places of the Far East. He hopes to get word of your brother."

"Yes. Mother is convinced that Allister is dead. But father and I cannot believe it. We believe that he is living, and that we shall find him. And father believes that it will not be very long. He told me only this morning that he was convinced that it would be soon."

"The Highland second sight."

"Yes. God grant that it may be so."

"Amen!" said McLeod solemnly.

For some minutes they leaned on the rail in silence. Her eyes were fixed on the water, which was flowing upstream with the rising tide. McLeod was looking away up the river to where he could distinguish the little passenger launch emerging from a fleet of cargo boats and bat-winged junks. It was steaming straight down the river at full speed. Presently he said:

"I wonder what's up. The launch is heading for us instead of going to her jetty."

"There are some Europeans on her," Miss MacAllister replied. "I can see two men wearing hel-

mets under the awning. They evidently are coming on board."

Then she uttered a faint cry. One of the men had stepped from under the awning and stood at his full height on the bow of the launch. The next instant he took off his helmet and waved it at McLeod. The sunlight gleamed on a mass of fair hair.

"Oh!" she said. "It is Dr. Sinclair. As he stood up I thought it was Allister. Their figures are exactly alike. But it was foolish of me."

McLeod seemed hardly to heed what she was saying. He had climbed on the rail, was frantically waving his white cap, and yelling like a schoolboy.

"What cronies you two are!" she said with mock severity, but laughing all the while. "Talk about the Scotch being clannish! You Canadians beat anything I ever met for clannishness."

"Just some Canadians," answered McLeod. "Will you excuse me?" he called back as he went below.

"Those two must be desperately in love," she said to herself as she smilingly responded to Sinclair's courteous salutation from the bow of the launch.

The next instant McLeod had hold of both Sinclair and Gorman and was ushering them up the companion-way. The sergeant would have declined. But McLeod would take no refusal. The company present were his and Captain Whiteley's guests. And whoever they chose to invite would have to be received as such. And not only Sinclair, but the consul and others who had known him noticed that Gorman's brogue and exaggerated Irishisms were dropped as easily as if they had all been assumed, and the Irish noncom was as much at ease and as correct in his behaviour as any of those who boasted gentle birth.

XX

THE INFALLIBLE EXPERTS

THE next evening (it was a Saturday) Dr. Sinclair dined with the MacAllisters. To his surprise, and much to his delight, he was the only guest. For the first time he saw something of their home life. He saw, too, Miss MacAllister in a rôle different from anything he had seen before. Up to this time he had always met her as a passenger or a guest, with no responsibilities save those of amusing and being amused. She had been the centre of an admiring circle, free to be as whimsical or wayward as the fancy of the moment suggested. That evening she shared with her mother the duties of hostess and devoted herself to making the evening pleasant for their guest. And Sinclair thought that never before had a single evening brought him so much enjoyment.

He wondered at the change. Was it another side of her character? Or was it that she had changed her attitude towards himself? The previous afternoon he had noticed that she received him with a frank cordiality which had surprised and delighted him. But she had been just as ready with gay banter and raillery as ever, especially when talking to Lanyon or any others of the guests who pressed their attentions upon her. This evening there was none of that. Bright and entertaining she certainly was. But there was not a trace of the whimsical, teasing spirit she

had formerly manifested, nor a word which could make him feel uncomfortable. As the evening sped away he felt himself becoming more and more fascinated. He had met many beautiful and attractive women, but never one who cast such a spell over him.

Mrs. MacAllister was not extremely cordial. She did not wax enthusiastic over him as she had done over De Vaux and Carteret. But she was a Highland hostess in her own home. And though it might be only a temporary home in a foreign land, and though she had not been anxious to have Dr. Sinclair for dinner, she had too much of the hospitality of her native hills to do otherwise than endeavour to make him feel that he was welcome there.

Mr. MacAllister was cordiality itself. In Sinclair he found a kindred spirit. His interest in men, to whatever race they might belong, his keen insight and trained powers of observation, were refreshing to the shrewd business man after the many men he met who went about the world with eyes which did not see. From the moment they sat down to dinner until they rose from it he plied Sinclair with questions and compared the doctor's observations with his own.

"You have had a great opportunity of studying the Chinese during the last couple of months," he said. "I envy you. Since you went over to Keelung I have visited Foochow, spent another short spell in Amoy, and travelled over a considerable part of South Formosa. But I have felt all the time that I really did not get into touch with the natives. I couldn't speak their languages. I was staying always in the homes of foreigners. I came into contact with the Chinese only, as it were, at second hand. But

for one who has just arrived among them, you have had a remarkable experience and an exceptional opportunity. I envy you."

"It has been an opportunity, though of course too short to form anything like final conclusions. Nevertheless, I saw enough to convince me that the greater part of the information about China which is being served up to the Western world by so-called authorities is absolutely unreliable. The ten-day tourists and meteoric newspaper correspondents get only surface impressions, and even these are generally wrong."

"We had one of them here while you were at Keelung and father was in the South," said Miss MacAllister.

"Is that so? I had not heard. Who was it?"

"Mr. F. L. Y. Urquhart, the famous traveller and authority on China."

"Indeed! How long did he stay?"

"Arrived from Foochow on the gunboat *Falcon* in the forenoon. Called on the consul, the commissioner of customs, and ourselves. Lunched on the *Locust*. Went up river in the afternoon. Stayed one hour, and returned by the same launch. Had tennis and tea at the consulate. At 6.30 put off to join the *Falcon* again and sailed immediately for Amoy."

"And I suppose had the fate of Formosa settled."

"Oh, yes! Quite!"

"What is it?"

"The French will have the island in their possession in a month or six weeks at the outside. Their transports with large land forces and escorted by naval reënforcements have already passed the Suez. Before them the Chinese army will run like sheep, and

the inhabitants will submit without a blow. Once the French flag is hoisted it will never be taken down. Formosa is lost to Britain through the stupidity of old Lord Littlengland, the Foreign Secretary. He refused to accept it when China actually offered to cede it to Britain to keep it out of the hands of the French, as he had absolute assurance from Li Hung-chang himself."

"Excellently done!" exclaimed Sinclair, laughing at her mimicry of the assurance of the expert. "Did he not call on Dr. MacKay?"

"No. I suggested that he should. He replied that he put no reliance on the opinions of missionaries. They were all narrow-minded fanatics, who couldn't take a broad, large-minded view of the situation."

"So he missed the one man who knows more of the probabilities of this war than all the rest of us taken together?"

"Yes, he missed him entirely. Said that he didn't care to meet him."

"That is it exactly. It is just such self-conceited experts, who know all about China when they have been ashore at half a dozen seaports during the hours of call of a passenger liner and who refuse to learn from those who do know, who have given our Western nations such an exaggerated idea of their own superiority and of China's inferiority."

"Then you think that the Chinese have been underestimated as soldiers," said Mr. MacAllister.

"I certainly do. For one thing, I have never seen nor heard of among any other people anything like the ability of the Chinese to bear pain. I was compelled to perform without anæsthetics operations so painful that most Europeans or Americans would

rather have died than have endured them. Yet the Chinese bore them with little more than an occasional groan or a suppressed 'ai-yah.'"

"Why, then, is it that they have made such a poor showing when opposed to European troops? I have always been informed that it was the lack of physical courage."

"It is not because of the lack of courage. It is the lack of training and the lack of leadership. Going into battle vain, self-confident, and contemptuous towards the foreigners, they have suddenly found themselves exposed by incompetent commanders, mowed down by the foreign weapons, disconcerted by well-ordered movements of trained men, and helpless to meet foreign strategy. The inevitable panic followed, and they ran."

"But we have been told again and again by the experts that it is impossible to drill the Chinese; that they will never be anything else than a mob."

"Then I wish those experts could have seen Sergeant Gorman and his ambulance corps. He was given some of the toughest material in Liu Ming-chuan's army. In a month's time they moved like clock-work. As the American general they have over there said, I'd just like to see Gorman 'lickin' a regiment into fightin' shape.' General Gordon proved what could be done with a Chinese army during the Tai-ping rebellion. If China only had a few native General Gordons, the world would soon receive notice that China was to be left alone."

"Is that not just where the difficulty lies, the lack of able, patriotic leadership? The authorities tell us that there is no patriotism in China. They say that every man is for himself, or at most for his own city

or province, but he cares nothing for the country as a whole."

"That may have been true in the past, and doubtless still is true of the mass of the people. But it is no longer true of many of the younger and better educated men. There are young officers in the army who are just as patriotically Chinese, whether they come from the North or Centre or South, as we are British, whether we be from Britain or Canada or Australia. They are learning more from defeats than they would from victories. Some day before very long China will produce a man whom his countrymen will follow. Then it will say 'Hands off!' to the world."

"What do you think is the country's greatest need at the present moment? The missionaries say, Christianity. Hart, the Inspector General of Customs, who has lived half a lifetime in China, and the American Minister at Pekin endorse the missionaries' opinions. The special correspondents and the experts say political reform. What do you think?"

"Christianity, most emphatically. The political reforms will follow. When the new China appears in the world its leaders will be Christians."

Mrs. MacAllister, who had been listening with ill-concealed impatience, threw back her head and sniffed.

"Dr. Sinclair," she said, "do you really think that it makes any difference with these Chinese whether they call themselves Christians or heathens?"

"I am quite sure of it, Mrs. MacAllister."

"Well, I don't believe that a Christian Chinese is one bit different from a heathen Chinese. They are both just dirty Chinese."

"If you could see the difference between Dr. MacKay's students, who were with me as nurses and hospital assistants, and their heathen neighbours," replied Sinclair, "you would not say that. I have never seen nurses or medical students in a hospital at home more cleanly, faithful or efficient, or more apt to learn. Their people were just common, ignorant Chinese peasants. I know of no explanation of the difference between these boys and others of their class, except that these were Christians and the others were not."

"I see that you quite agree with my husband in this. But I do not. When we were at home it seemed romantic to hear about foreign missions. But when I came out here, and saw those ignorant natives, and heard some of them called Christians, it quite disgusted me. And Dr. MacKay actually asked us to go to the native church and sit at the Lord's Table with them. I was so surprised at him that I did not know what answer to make. I do not believe that they are real Christians at all. What was it Mr. Carteret called them? Oh, yes! Rice Christians! He said that they were 'rice Christians.' That means that they were in it for what they could get out of it. Mr. Carteret said that he had never known a real Christian among them."

Sinclair had intended to allow the subject to drop when he saw that for some reason his hostess held very pronounced views on it, different from his own. But her quoting Carteret as an authority on the sincerity or reality of religious beliefs touched him to the quick. He answered very quietly but firmly:

"All over the south of Scotland, from the Atlantic to the North Sea, in churchyard or hillside or lonely

moor, are to be found flat slabs or tall monuments, marking the spots where the Covenanters of two hundred years ago were slain or where their bodies were laid to rest. Some of them were gentlemen of birth. Some were cultured ministers. But the great majority were plain people, sometimes ignorant people; just ordinary hard-working, unlearned Scottish peasants. Yet the places where they died are sacred to-day. Monuments are erected to them. Books are written about them. They are held up before us as the martyrs and heroes of our Church. Why? Because they died rather than deny their faith.

"Less than a month ago and less than twenty miles from here, some plain people—merchants, farmers, artisans—were asked to deny their faith. They refused. They were beaten. They were tortured. They were hanged by the hair of the head. Two of them were drowned. Their religion was the same as that of the Scottish Covenanters. They died for it just as willingly as the Covenanters did. They were Chinese. If we say that the Scottish sufferers were martyrs and heroes, I do not know how we can refuse to say the same of the Chinese."

He had spoken quietly, in a low tone of voice. But the very quietness of his manner had deepened the impression of tense feeling, of emotion kept under firm control. His words had grown eloquent in spite of himself.

When he ceased there was perfect silence for some minutes. Miss MacAllister was looking wonderingly at him. He had always seemed so good-humoured, so easy-going that she had sometimes asked herself if he was really capable of deep, passionate feeling. At an unexpected moment she had got her answer.

There was no mistaking the passion of admiration for a heroic deed which possessed him, the indignant protest against an injustice. It was all the more impressive because it was so restrained. For reasons which perhaps she could not explain to herself she felt a thrill of pleasure at recognizing this note of passion in his voice.

Mrs. MacAllister also sat silent for a time. Then she said in a very different tone from that which she had used before:

"Perhaps you are right, Dr. Sinclair. I had not looked at it in that light."

"It is not easy for any one of us to be entirely just to peoples so unlike us as are the Chinese," said her husband. "Yet, when we get down to the mainsprings of their conduct, we find that they are pretty much the same as our own."

XXI

THE LANGUAGE OF SONG

WHEN dinner was over, Sinclair asked Miss MacAllister if she would play and sing for them. "I have not heard a song," he said, "nor the sound of a civilized instrument since the evening at the consulate, just after we landed."

For a moment her eyes danced mischievously. A question about that Indian song of his trembled upon her lips. But she thought better of it, deciding not to say anything which might mar the evening by any misunderstanding. So she replied:

"I am afraid that you will hardly call this piano a civilized instrument after you have heard it. It has almost ceased to be an instrument at all. Its age, the climate, and the lack of a tuner have combined to make it a mere caricature of a piano. But, if you'll try to imagine that the weird sounds it produces are music, I shall do my best."

"Your voice will more than compensate for any deficiencies in the instrument," he said as he conducted her to the piano.

"Dr. Sinclair, I am surprised at you. I didn't think that you would flatter."

"I am not flattering. I mean it."

She bent over the music; but he could see the warm colour flow up the side of her neck and face. He wondered if he had been too bold. Had he displeased her? She kept her head bent down and slowly turned the leaves of a song folio which rested on the keys.

He could see little of her face. Had he by his rashness annoyed her and brought discord into that delightful evening?

Presently she seemed to have made a choice. She gave him one quick, shy glance, and he saw her face. The blush still lingered there, but there was no trace of displeasure.

"Would you like me to sing this?"

She laid the folio open on the piano. Sinclair's heart gave a leap. She had chosen a love song. It was not indeed a maiden's tale of love, but the love of a man for a maid. Nevertheless, it was a woman's song, and a woman's tenderness breathed through both words and melody of immortal "Annie Laurie."

"You could not have chosen anything I should have liked better. 'Annie Laurie' will never grow old."

She sang the first verse alone. Then she said:

"I thought that you were going to sing with me. Will you not put in a bass?" And a little mischievously: "It will at least help to drown the discords of this old instrument."

"I was enjoying your voice so much," he replied, "that I did not wish to spoil the pleasure by adding mine. But, if you wish it, I'll join you."

Other songs, mostly old Scotch favourites, followed. Sinclair noted that she did not choose war-songs as when she sang at the consulate. Her mood was different, and she chose those into which the singers of her race had poured all their pathos and their tenderness.

As they talked in the intervals, and sometimes prolonged the selection of a song, the hesitation and mutual reserve wore off and soon they found themselves conversing with the quiet confidence of those who had

long been friends. There seemed to be no room for misunderstandings.

Again and again Sinclair caught himself wondering if this were the same girl who had badgered him so unmercifully a few weeks before. Or was this present situation only a bright dream, from which he would awaken to find himself still the object of her badinage and laughter? "Well," he thought to himself, "dream or no dream, I'll enjoy it while it lasts and hope that I may be long in waking up."

But there were a few things which reminded him that it was not a dream. Mrs. MacAllister did not enter quite so heartily into sympathy with her daughter's mood as did Dr. Sinclair. Perhaps it was not to be expected. More than once she endeavoured to interject her disapproval of their choice of songs.

"What are you going to sing next, Jessie?" she asked when three love songs had followed one another without a break.

"'Robin Adair.'"

Mrs. MacAllister sniffed audibly.

"I do not think much of your choice," she said tartly.

"You like it, father, do you not?"

"Oh, yes, Jessie! It suits me very well. Sing it."

When it was sung Mrs. MacAllister returned to the attack:

"Why do you not sing something lively instead of those lonesome pieces? It gives me a creepy feeling. Dr. Sinclair is just back from the war. Can you not sing him some fighting song, such as 'Bonnie Dundee' or 'Scots Wha Ha'e wi' Wallace Bled'?"

"Mother, I do not feel like singing fighting songs this evening. We are likely to have fighting enough

soon. But if Dr. Sinclair has become so bloodthirsty as a result of his service at the front, I'll try to satisfy him. Must you give vent to your feelings in a war-song, Dr. Sinclair?" A gleam of fun shot through the mock anxiety of her face.

"Not at all, Miss MacAllister. I saw enough of glorious war to do me for a little while. The glory of it is mostly in the songs. There is little glory in the actuality. Anyway, I am enjoying myself too much as it is to take the chance of spoiling it by a change."

Miss MacAllister answered by a warning shake of the head, the severity of which was disarmed by the accompanying smile. But her mother set her lips close together, elevated her nose, and sniffed very audibly.

All unheeding, the young people chose another Scottish song, "Bonnie Charlie's Noo Awa." As the plaintive words and the wailing notes rang out,

> "Mony a heart will break in twa
> Should you ne'er come back again,"

Mr. MacAllister slipped out of the room into the verandah which looked over the river to the tall dark peak beyond.

Then the lament of the chorus rose into a cry and died away in a sob:

> "Will ye no come back again?
> Will ye no come back again?
> Better lo'ed ye canna be.
> Will ye no come back again?"

Mrs. MacAllister rose and hurriedly followed her husband.

A late moon was rising over the great bulk of the Taitoon range, shedding its pale light on the brim-

ming river, save where the houses of the town and the clustered junks cast long, dark shadows. Out in mid-stream the *Locust* swam on the mirror-like surface. The call of a night bird rang plaintively across the water. Within, the voices of the singers rose again in the last stanza:

"Sweet's the lav'rock's note and lang;
Liltin' wildly up the glen;
But aye to me he sings ae sang,
Will ye no come back again?"

In the dark shadow of the deep verandah a man and woman, both middle-aged, pressed close to each other. His arm was around her waist. Her head was on his shoulder. As he caressed and soothed her his tears fell on her face and mingled with her own. It was not of a long-dead prince they were thinking. It was of a lost son of whom they did not know whether he was living or dead.

The silver tones of the gunboat's bell rang out on the sweet night air, striking six times. Sinclair pulled out his watch with a look of incredulity:

"Eleven o'clock! Miss MacAllister, I am ashamed of myself. I had no idea it was so late. I have been enjoying myself so much that this evening has passed like a dream."

"I am glad that you have enjoyed it. The time has passed very quickly to me, too."

"You do not know what pleasure it gives me to hear you say so. It has been to me the pleasantest evening of my life."

She blushed at the implication, gave him the reward of a smile, and rose hurriedly from the piano:

"Where are father and mother? I must find them to bid you good-bye."

XXII

HALCYON DAYS

THE next three days were to Dr. Sinclair a continuation of that evening's dream. They were full of incident. But what made them still more pleasant and memorable was the fact that he often met Miss MacAllister, and that she was uniformly kind and seemed to enjoy his company. It is true that after Saturday evening they did not again meet alone. But no matter how gay the company might be, nor how much chaffing and repartee was passing among them, she never reverted to the attitude she had adopted during the first week of their acquaintance. She did not try to make him feel uncomfortable, nor did she cause a laugh at his expense.

On Sunday morning at nine o'clock there was a service in the little native church, a few rods from the hong of MacAllister, Munro Co. In addition to the local Christians there were many refugees present who had fled from their homes in the inland villages, having lost everything but their lives.

The Communion of the Lord's Supper was observed, Dr. MacKay presiding, assisted by his missionary colleague and some of the oldest native preachers. Mr. MacAllister and his daughter, Dr. Sinclair, an engineer and a petty officer from the *Locust,* and one member of the customs staff sat with the wives of the missionaries and the native converts. The service was conducted in Chinese. Consequently the words

were unintelligible to most of the foreigners present. Yet they were conscious of the tense feeling, the close and reverent attention, the spirit of prayer of the native worshippers.

Once only did the officiating missionary use the English language. He was administering the wine, and spoke the words of a formula in Chinese. The audience had been silent and reverent before. Now the silence could be felt. He repeated it in English:

"'This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is shed for many for the remission of sins: Drink ye all of it. It may be that many of you will drink no more of the fruit of the vine until that day when you drink it new in the Kingdom of God.'"

When the service was over Sinclair walked slowly along the narrow street with Miss MacAllister and her father. For a time they were silent, as if each were letting the impression of it sink into the mind. Miss MacAllister was the first to speak.

"I have never thought myself religious," she said. "I am afraid that I have been like so many others, a member of a church because it is customary and respectable. But if the spirit and atmosphere which were in that little Chinese church this morning prevailed in our big churches at home, I think I could be religious."

"I am afraid that you are underestimating your own interest in religion," replied her father. "And perhaps you are mixing, just a little, reverent feelings and actually living as a Christian. They are very different things. But it is true that the spirit of worship I have found in many of those native churches has made the services of a considerable proportion of our home churches appear mere barren, lifeless formalism in comparison. The West may have again to learn

from the East the devotion and self-forgetfulness of Christianity."

They had reached a point in the narrow, crooked street which commanded a view of the harbour and of the sea beyond. An exclamation from Sinclair directed their attention seaward.

A small merchant steamer was seen coming towards the harbour. As she drew near a puff of smoke streamed out from the *Vipère,* and after an interval the heavy boom of a cannon floated along the water. The little merchantman promptly reversed. A boat from the Frenchman ran alongside. After half an hour's delay the boat pulled away again, and the *Fokien* steamed slowly in, picking up a pilot as she came. Her captain had satisfied the search party that she had no contraband of war on board.

In the afternoon Sinclair and Miss MacAllister met at a service conducted in English in the little mission college for the benefit of the foreign community. The missionaries, the consul and his wife and daughter, the officers and a detachment of men from the *Locust,* and the MacAllisters attended. Very few of the other foreign residents took advantage of it. Most of them had shed their church-going habits and their interest in religion of any kind as soon as they came to the Far East.

Even Carteret's desire to stand well with the MacAllisters could not overcome his rooted aversion to attending a Christian service of any kind. Mrs. MacAllister was much surprised at his absence, in view of the readiness with which he had expressed his opinions on the sincerity of the Chinese converts and his apparent interest in matters spiritual. She thought that he must be weary from his duties during the

week and must feel the need of resting on the Sabbath. Otherwise she was sure that he would have been present, as he was so much interested in religion.

It might have been a revelation to her to have known how the pious young man was at that moment engaged. In company with Clark, the tea-buyer, and two other kindred spirits, he was enjoying a game of baccarat, while sundry bottles of various brands decorated the table. Before that Sabbath day reached the midnight hour, Clark and his two companions were to subside in more or less restful positions on the floor, there to lie in stertorous, swinish slumber till well on in the morrow. But Carteret, who was banker in the game, though his pale face was flushed and his eyes were glassy, was able to reach his room with comparatively steady step; was able to feel with satisfaction that in his pockets rested securely the spare cash of his three comrades, together with various I.O.U.'s. He was a pious young man, much interested in religion, and greatly distressed by the insincerity of the native converts.

Meanwhile, most of those who had been at the service had accepted the consul's invitation to ascend to the top of the old Dutch fort, and from that lofty point of vantage survey the scenery and watch any movements on board the French warships.

"What is that away to the northwest, just north of where the sun will set?" said Sinclair. "Is that an evening cloud or is it a trail of smoke from a steamer?"

Commander Gardenier's glass was on it in an instant:

"It is the smoke of a steamer, and she is coming

directly this way. Looks as if she were from Foochow."

They watched her while she came over the rim of the horizon and drew rapidly nearer. Now the Frenchmen could see her, and there was a movement on board. But she evidently did not see them against the background of the coast.

"Up goes her flag. She sees the Frenchman and is letting them know who she is. She is British. What do you make of her, Boville?" handing him the glass. "You know most of the boats along the Coast."

"She's a long way off; but she looks like the *Waverly,* a tramp. If it is, she is almost sure to have contraband on board. By Jove! she's putting about!"

A long jet of smoke spirted out from the *Vipère.* The report went volleying off among the hills.

"A blank!" exclaimed Gardenier. "I believe that fool captain is going to run for it. He's stoking for all he's worth and heading straight across the channel. He must be crazy. He hasn't a chance in the world."

"No, I fancy he has no chance on that smooth sea," replied Boville. "But if there was a gale blowing, or better still, a typhoon, Archie Scott would drive that old tub of his through at full speed, where Monsieur of the *Vipère* would have to heave to."

But there was no prospect of a storm that calm evening and the warship was tearing through the water. Another jet of flame and smoke streamed out from her. A little plume of spray rose close to the bow of the fleeing steamer.

"It's all up with Archie this time," laughed Gar-

denier. "The Frenchman is too fast for him. That shot brought him to his senses."

The daring little merchantman was boarded, and just as the sun set she was seen steaming back towards Foochow, while the *Vipère* returned to her place of guard.

"This is quite exciting," said Miss MacAllister. "I had little idea when we sailed from Amoy that I was going to get so near to actual war."

"I only hope that you may not get any nearer," replied the consul, a little grimly.

"Why, Mr. Beauchamp? Do you think that there is much prospect of there being fighting right here?"

"I really can't say. I don't know what is in the minds of those Frenchmen. But I do not like the way they are acting. It is pretty much the way they manœuvred before they bombarded Keelung."

"Wouldn't that be great? To be in the midst of a bombardment!"

"It's not so romantic as it is to read about it in the papers," said the consul. "What do you think, Sinclair? Hallo! What's this? Look here, doctor, I'll have you arrested for alienating the affections of my daughter."

The remark caused all eyes to be turned towards Sinclair. He was seated on one of the battlements. On his knee was perched Constance Beauchamp. One arm was thrown around his neck. With the other hand she was caressing and arranging the heavy waves of his fair hair. A flush appeared under the tan of his face. Before he had time to reply Constance broke in:

"Oh, daddy, I was just asking Dr. Sinclair why he did not let his hair grow long and fall in big curls

on his shoulders. Then he would be so handsome. He would be just like the picture of Harold Fair-Hair, King of Norway, in the last story-book Aunt Jo sent me from England. Dr. Sinclair, won't you let your hair grow? Do! For me!"

Sinclair's face had crimsoned at the sudden attention drawn to him and the frank admiration of the little maid. But he was too gallant to refuse:

"I couldn't resist that appeal. I'll promise. I'll not get my hair cut again until you give me leave."

"Oh, goody! I knew you would do it for me. You're lovely."

"I admire your courage, doctor, more than your good sense," laughed her father. "But it is always the way. A big man can be twisted around the fingers of the littlest maid."

But the one whose presence at this little scene had made the blood tingle in Sinclair's face more sharply than all the others thought to herself:

"It is a child's instinctive attraction to a true man."

That scene on the ramparts of the old Dutch fort became one of the most cherished treasures in the picture-gallery of her memory.

XXIII

IMPENDING STORMS

"WELL, Mr. De Vaux, I see that the French fleet has arrived. Has the commander given any intimations of his intentions yet?"

"Bless my soul, Mr. MacAllister! . . . Is it possible that you have not heard? . . . These boys are most exasperating. They'll be the death of me yet. . . . 'Pon my honour, they will! . . . I was with the consul when Admiral Lespès' messenger arrived, and the consul gave me the notice to read. . . . Extraordinarily decent of the consul! . . . I sent the boy to you that very minute with a chit. Did he not deliver it?"

"Not yet."

"I'll have him flogged, Mr. MacAllister. . . . 'Pon my soul, I will. . . . It is the only way to deal with them, Mr. MacAllister. . . . Now, where can he be? . . . Stopped somewhere along the road, playing fantan and gambling away his month's wages! . . . By——! . . . 'Pon my word, I mean it's most exasperating. . . . Flogging is the only thing to cure them when they start gambling. Isn't that your experience, Carteret?"

"I think that they all ought to be flogged," replied Carteret languidly. "Never yet met a Chinese who was good for anything."

"Opinions may differ on that point, Mr. Carteret," said Mr. MacAllister sharply. "But, De Vaux, you

have not yet told me what notice the French admiral sent."

"By——! . . . Bless my soul, I mean how stupid of me! I beg a thousand pardons, Mr. MacAllister. . . . How did I forget that? . . . Those boys annoy me so. I really cannot think of what I am doing. 'Pon my soul, I cannot! . . . But Admiral Lespès' notice! Would you believe it, he says that he will bombard the town to-morrow morning at seven o'clock. . . . Did ever you hear of such an atrocity?"

"How do you do, Mr. De Vaux? Did I hear you say just now that Tamsui was to be bombarded? Or was I mistaken?"

"Miss MacAllister, you are perfectly correct. . . . I am sure that you are never mistaken. . . . 'Pon my soul, I am! . . . You are quite right. I am sorry to say that Tamsui is to be bombarded in the morning."

"Oh, I'm so glad! That is, I'm not glad that it is to be bombarded. But I am glad that since it is going to happen it should take place while we are here. I should have been so disappointed to have missed it. How do you do, Mr. Carteret?"

"Since the ladies have arrived, we had better proceed to luncheon at once," said Mr. MacAllister. "We do not know what developments there may be this afternoon."

As soon as they were seated at the table Mrs. MacAllister turned to Carteret and said:

"Do you really think, Mr. Carteret, that the lives of the foreign residents will be endangered by the bombardment?"

"There will be very little danger, I assure you, Mrs. MacAllister. The French will direct their fire at

the earthworks and the camps on the downs. As soon as they plump a few shells among them the whole Chinese army will run like sheep, and the bombardment will be over."

"I am so glad to hear you say so, Mr. Carteret. It was what I felt myself. But it is a relief to know that one who has lived here and knows the natives is of the same opinion. You think that the French will take possession of the town early in the day?"

"Assuredly! Before to-morrow night there'll not be a Chinese soldier nearer than Taipeh."

"I do not believe that the French are going to have it so easy as that," broke in De Vaux. "'Pon my soul, I do not! . . . The Chinese will give them more than they reckon upon. Mark my words. . . . Dr. MacKay thinks the same, and he knows more about the Chinese than any of us."

"But, Mr. De Vaux," replied Mrs. MacAllister, "you must remember that Dr. MacKay is married to a Chinese woman. Really, I never got such a shock as when I heard that. My opinion of missionaries went down to zero. To take a Chinese woman as his wife! How could he?"

De Vaux's face became very red. Carteret maintained his attitude of cynical composure.

"I suppose it was one of the sacrifices he felt himself called upon to make in order to do the Lord's work," he replied sneeringly. "These fanatics will justify any insanity by claiming that the Lord commanded them to do it."

Miss MacAllister's colour deepened. Her eyes flashed ominously. Her father's face was grave, to the verge of sternness. Before either of them could speak De Vaux interposed.

"Dr. MacKay is not the only one who thinks that the Chinese will put up a resistance," he said. "When I was coming along, Dr. Sinclair and Dr. Black of the *Locust* were busy at the Mission Hospital, getting it ready to take care of a lot of wounded. 'Pon my honour as a gentleman, they're right. There'll be fighting here to-morrow. By——! I mean, 'pon my soul, there will!"

Mrs. MacAllister sniffed.

"I do not depend much on Dr. Sinclair's judgment," she said, "since he went over to Keelung to be a surgeon among the Chinese. I was very much surprised at him. I cannot understand how he can endure being among those dirty natives. It would make me sick. And to handle their bodies and treat their wounds! . . . It's loathsome, perfectly loathsome. I am astonished at Dr. Sinclair."

"Dr. Sinclair evidently has not your feelings about it, Mrs. MacAllister," said Carteret in his most contemptuous tone. "He is a Canadian, and on his paternal farm was probably not accustomed to any more savoury surroundings than he finds among the Chinese. Doubtless, he feels very much at home."

The next moment he bitterly repented having spoken. Miss MacAllister sat up very straight. Her eyes gleamed at him like two dagger-points. Her face flushed crimson, and then paled with anger:

"Mr. Carteret, that remark of yours was entirely uncalled for. Dr. Sinclair is a gentleman. You are not a gentleman or you would not have made such a statement."

"Oh, Jessie!" cried her mother in horrified accents. "What are you saying? You did not mean that."

"I did mean it, and I do mean it."

Mr. MacAllister, who usually with ready tact softened such acerbities, maintained a grim silence. De Vaux threw himself into the breach and made an excited, stuttering attempt at mediation, compelling Miss MacAllister to laugh against her will.

In spite of this, and in spite of Carteret's abject apology and retraction, a tense feeling pervaded the atmosphere throughout the remainder of the luncheon, and all were glad when it was over.

To Miss MacAllister the remainder of the day was no less trying. She realized that her sudden flame of indignation had surprised her into betraying to prying and unfriendly eyes feelings toward Dr. Sinclair which she had not before dared to confess to herself. She knew that her mother had been bitterly chagrined by her open espousal of the big Canadian's cause and by the merciless snub she had given that ambitious woman's pet aristocrat. But she knew her mother too well to imagine for one instant that this scene, painful though it was, would make her desist from the purpose to which she had set her mind. She had not long to wait for the proof of the truth of her conclusions.

That afternoon the ladies were left pretty much to their own devices. Some of the men were busy preparing for the morrow. Others who had little to do were on the old fort or other vantage points, watching the warships which lay just outside the harbour, and were speculating in an inexpert fashion on the probabilities and prospects of the following day. All of which speculations and prophecies the following day proved to be false. But in the meantime the idle ones grew eloquent over their own imaginings, and, like most armchair experts, persuaded themselves

that they did know something about war and the respective fighting qualities of French marines and Chinese soldiers.

Taking advantage of her husband's absence, Mrs. MacAllister called her daughter into her room. After some preliminary fencing, she plunged into the subject she had in mind:

"There is no need of my concealing from you, Jessie, how deeply I was grieved and disappointed by your conduct towards Mr. Carteret to-day."

"I am very sorry to have hurt your feelings, mother. But I am not sorry for telling Mr. Carteret the truth and giving him what he deserved."

"I do not understand what you mean by saying that you gave Mr. Carteret what he deserved."

"Mother, Mr. Carteret took advantage of his privileges as our guest and of the friendship we have showed him to make an unwarranted and ungentlemanly attack on another friend of ours, who has also been our guest."

"Tut, tut, Jessie! Mr. Carteret did not say anything about Dr. Sinclair which should make any sensible person angry."

"He made statements about Dr. Sinclair which were not true; and he made them in the most insulting way possible."

"That is merely a matter of opinion, my dear. Dr. Sinclair himself acknowledged that he was born and reared on a Canadian farm. And though I will acknowledge that he has done remarkably well, considering that, to a gentleman of Mr. Carteret's birth and training he is just a peasant, nothing more than a common peasant."

"Then, mother, to Mr. Carteret we are just peas-

ants, nothing more than common peasants. Your father was a shepherd, and father's was a peasant farmer."

Mrs. MacAllister coloured at the thrust, but tried to evade it.

"Jessie," she said, "what is the use of always humiliating your father and mother by continually reminding them that they were born poor? We have risen above that now and associate with the best in the land. People should be judged by what they are, and not by what they were born to."

"That is exactly what I think, mother. By that standard Dr. Sinclair, who was born on a Canadian farm, is a gentleman. And Mr. Carteret, who was born in an English castle, is not a gentleman."

"For shame, Jessie, to talk like that! You have no right to say that of Mr. Carteret. You humiliated him at our own table to-day, and he bore it like a gentleman."

"Like a coward, you mean!"

"And by getting indignant on behalf of Dr. Sinclair," continued the mother, without paying any heed to the daughter's interjection, "you practically said to everybody that you were in love with him."

"I said no such thing."

"Both Mr. De Vaux and Mr. Carteret understood it that way."

"I don't care a fig what they understood."

"And when Dr. Sinclair hears of it he will understand it the same way."

"He will do no such thing. He is too much of a man."

Miss MacAllister spoke bravely. But the thrust had gone home. If there was one thing she dreaded,

it was the thought that she should make herself cheap, that she should appear to offer her love instead of having her love sought and won. The thought stung. But she would not acknowledge it.

"Jessie, has Dr. Sinclair spoken to you of marriage?"

"Mother, I cannot understand what makes you imagine such things. Dr. Sinclair has never spoken of the subject of marriage, even in the remotest and most impersonal way."

"Has he ever told you that he loves you?"

"Mother, I refuse to discuss this subject any further. It is absurd."

"You may say that it is absurd if you wish, Jessie. But, after the way you acted to-day, I thought that there must surely be some ground for your championship of him."

Again the implication stung. Had she been making herself cheap? Was her secret which she had refused to acknowledge to herself laid bare before everybody? She winced at the thought. But she said nothing.

Her mother pursued her advantage:

"Now, Mr. Carteret has followed the only course open to a gentleman of birth and breeding. He has honourably come to your father and mother and has asked our permission to be considered a suitor for your hand."

"Was that permission given?"

"Jessie, what do you take us for? Do you think that we have no care about your future? The heir presumptive to the title and estates of Lewesthorpe would be considered one of the catches of a London season."

"Mother, tell me, did father accept Mr. Carteret as a prospective lover and husband for me?"

"Yes, certainly. . . . That is—— You know your father's way. . . . He did not put it in so many words, but he gave what was equivalent to his consent."

"That is to say that father told Mr. Carteret I could choose for myself. Now, mother, is that not what father said?"

"Well, perhaps it was something like that. But, at any rate, it was the same thing as giving his consent. He made no objections to Mr. Carteret's trying to win you."

"That is just what I thought. Of course you gave your hearty consent and approval."

"Certainly, my daughter. What kind of a mother would I be if a handsome and accomplished young gentleman, a gentleman of birth and prospects, should offer you his heart and hand,—what kind of a mother would I be not to encourage his suit?"

"Then, mother, he can keep his heart and hand. I will have none of them."

"Jessie, do not make rash statements, which you may regret. I am not asking you to promise to marry Mr. Carteret. I only asked you to give him a chance to win your love."

"Mother, it is no use. I'll never love Mr. Carteret."

"But, Jessie, think of his prospects. His father is a feeble old man. His death is expected any day. The present heir has only one lung."

"I don't care if he had only quarter of one lung. It would make no difference to me."

"But, Jessie, stop and think of it. Mr. Carteret will

then be Lord Lewesthorpe, and you would be the Countess of Lewesthorpe."

"Mother, there is no use in your talking like that. I do not care if he were the Prince of Wales. I would not pledge myself to try to love a man whom I do not respect."

"Jessie, I am bitterly disappointed in you. You are all I have. If Allister were living it would be different." Tears, real tears, of grief and mortification sprang into the older woman's eyes and began to roll down her cheeks. "If I had Allister, it would be different. He would build up the family. But I have only you, and you will not do anything I wish. I am grievously disappointed."

"Mother, you are not fair to me. I have tried to do what you wanted. But you are asking of me what I cannot do. I cannot give myself body and soul to a man I despise, a man I can never love."

"But think of the title, Jessie, and the estates, and the old mansion built in the time of Queen Elizabeth. And think of the place you would have in society. You would learn to love him if you would only let yourself."

"Mother, is it possible that you think that I could love a man for these things? I must love him for himself, or not at all."

"Then I suppose that you will tell that low-born, penniless Canadian doctor that you love him," said her mother bitterly. "Next thing you'll be wanting to marry him and settle down here as a missionary among those dirty Chinese."

The taunt stung again as it had stung before. The quick blood flamed into her face and passionately she flashed back:

"I have not the slightest intention of marrying Dr. Sinclair."

It was the defiant answer of maidenly pride, fired by the insinuation that she had allowed her feelings to cause her to transgress the limits of maidenly reserve. In her sudden anger she was fighting against the dictates of her own heart.

But her mother, in the determination to satisfy her pitiful ambition, did not hesitate to seize the unfair advantage and wrest her daughter's words, giving them a meaning which had not been intended:

"I am very glad to hear you say, Jessie, that you will not marry Dr. Sinclair. Your attitude towards him the last few days gave to me as well as to others, and I am quite sure to Dr. Sinclair himself, the impression that you were in love with him. I am glad to have it from your own lips that it was nothing more than a passing fancy, a harmless flirtation."

Miss MacAllister waited to hear no more. She could not contradict her mother's artful twisting of her words without confessing her love. She could not do that, for Dr. Sinclair had not confessed his, nor had he asked for hers. She was trapped. Her mother had trapped her and she could find no escape.

She fled from her mother's room, ran to her own, and in a passion of tears of anger and shame threw herself on a couch. Was what her mother had said true? Had she exposed her heart to the vulgar gaze? Did they all think that she was offering her love to Sinclair without its being sought? She would teach them. They would not say that again.

XXIV

THE BALL BEGINS

BOOM! Boom!

Two jets of smoke spirted out from the new earth battery on the spur of the hill running down to the pilot village by the beach. The light sea-breeze met them, lifted them in balloon-shaped clouds, and carried them slowly backwards over the battery and against the hills. The earth trembled with the heavy explosions of the Krupps. One shell splashed a little to the left of the *Triomphante,* and a trifle short. The other plume of spray rose directly beyond the warship and so close that it showed how near the Chinese gunner had come to his target.

"By Jove! the Chinese have opened the ball. They did not wait for the Frenchman to start. It's only twenty to seven."

The consul clicked his watch shut as he spoke, and turned his binoculars on the French fleet. Sinclair and Sergeant Gorman, who stood with him on the top of the old fort, had their glasses turned in the same direction. They had not long to wait. On board the *Triomphante* men could be seen running to their stations. In less than two minutes a puff of smoke streaming out from her told that the duel was on. Before the boom of the big naval gun had travelled across the intervening two miles or more of space other jets of smoke poured out from the *Triomphante,* the *Galissonnière,* and the *Duguay Trouin* as they lay

strung across the mouth of the harbour. To the north and east of the first of these a little cloud, rising and floating on the breeze, told where the *Vipère* lay close in shore, hidden from sight by the hills.

The second of October had come, and with it the bombardment. In spite of its imminence, most of the foreign residents were calmly enjoying their morning nap when the tempest broke upon them. Of course there were exceptions. The officers and men of the *Locust* were at their places, ready for any duty. Dr. MacKay's working day had begun hours before. The commissioner of customs had been down to the offices to take a last inventory before the storm of iron and fire in which they were likely to be destroyed should begin. He had been joined by Mr. MacAllister and his daughter, who were looking for a point of vantage from which to see the opening of the battle. These and the group at the consulate were the only ones astir. The rest were peacefully slumbering, prolonging the morning doze to the last moment, though they knew that the bombardment was announced to commence at seven o'clock sharp.

Their drowse was rudely broken in upon. Within fifteen minutes from when the first gun was fired the four ships and the Chinese batteries were putting up a tremendous concert. The earth rocked with the bellowings of the great guns and the bursting of shells. The *Triomphante* and the *Galissonnière* ever and anon alternated a broadside with the independent firing of single guns. Even Carteret was awakened when the windows of his room were shattered and a great slab of plaster fell from the ceiling, bringing his mosquito curtain down on top of him in a tangled ruin.

"You will be going down to the hospital shortly, doctor?" said the consul.

"Yes, if the French keep it up like this, I guess we'll have something to do there."

"Will you drop into Thomson's and tell them that my wife and Constance will call for them in a few minutes and accompany them to the rendezvous?"

"I'll tell them."

"And Dr. MacKay and his family—do you think that there is any use of our trying again to get him to go to some safer place?"

"No, there is no use. He has his students there, and a lot of his preachers and converts with their wives and families. To send them to any of the interior towns would mean Sin-tiam over again. They are in less danger here from the French shells than they would be from the heathen mobs. He will not leave them. If they are going to be in danger, he will be in danger with them."

"I fancied that it would be that way with him. Well, I think all the more of him for it. Now I must go and get my family down to the rendezvous and see that the rest of the British residents are under the best cover possible. Hallo! Who's that on the beach road below the custom house?"

"The commissioner, Mr. MacAllister, and Miss MacAllister," said Sinclair, who had his glasses on them.

"What the deuce are they doing there?"

"Looking for a good place from which to see the fun," laughed Sinclair, though his face showed more anxiety than mirth.

"Boville ought to have more sense," snapped the

consul. "Last evening he was in a great fluster about seeing that everybody was safe at the rendezvous before the ball began. But I suppose that Miss MacAllister has coaxed him, and he couldn't resist."

"Quite likely," replied the doctor, while an odd little smile played around his eyes and the corners of his mouth. "They are turning back now. Mr. MacAllister has taken charge. He has the young lady by the arm and they are heading for home."

"By Jove! she needs some one whom she can't twist round her fingers."

The two men laughed; Sinclair a little doubtfully, as if he was not too sure that such a thing was possible; the consul with the air of conscious superiority which needs not fear. They little knew what the day had in store for them.

"We must be off. It's getting pretty hot over there, and it may swing around this way any minute. Sergeant, would you stay here a little while and watch Monsieur *Lespès?* If he seems inclined to pay his compliments to the town as well as to the batteries, run up the red signal. But don't stay here after this is in the line of fire. I don't want you to get your head knocked off."

"Very good, sir! I shall thry not to come down to you wid me head in me hand."

Sinclair and the consul ran down the dark stairway within the old fort and hurried away, the latter to his house close by, the former to MacKay's to get his instruments and then to Thomson's to give them the consul's message. Gorman stood alone on his watch-tower, looking out upon the scene.

The solid old memorial of Dutch and Chinese workmanship stood on the most prominent angle of the

hill which thrust itself forward towards the sea. For two and a half centuries it had braved siege and storm and the wasting forces of tropical typhoons, of rain and sun and clinging, insidious tropical vegetation. In a line with it, along the brow of the hill facing the harbour, were the consul's house, Dr. MacKay's bungalow and that of his colleague, and the residences of the customs officers. Just behind MacKay's house were the two mission schools. In a parallel line below the hill and mostly close to the shore were the customs house, then after a considerable interval MacAllister, Munro Co.'s, Reid & Co.'s, Dr. Bergmann's house, and the Mission Hospital, right in the native town. Away at the far end of the town, a mile beyond the other foreign residences on a little eminence facing the river, were the house and godowns of Scott & Co., known as Peeatow. Over each foreign building flew the British flag, save where Dr. Bergmann had hoisted the flag of his fatherland. Out in midstream, right in front of MacAllister, Munro Co.'s, the trim, workmanlike *Locust* floated on the rising tide.

The residence and godowns of Mr. MacAllister's firm had been chosen as the rendezvous. They were in a sheltered position in what was almost a little cove between the hill and the river. There Commander Gardenier had sent a force of ten bluejackets under a petty officer. As Gorman moved his glass from point to point to fix all in his memory, a boat pulled away from the *Locust,* carrying another guard of eight men to Peeatow, where a number of foreigners had elected to remain, because of its distance from the ships of war.

The sergeant turned again to the artillery duel.

All over the open downs to the north shells were furrowing the hard, dry soil, ricochetting from knoll to knoll, and exploding harmlessly on the grass. The points where the fewest shells fell were the hollows in which the Chinese camps were sheltered. In spite of the hurtling showers of projectiles which at times filled the air, these seemed to be practically immune.

"Howly Moses!" said Gorman to himself, "if that's the kind of shootin' the Frinchies do, the only safe spot in tin square miles is the man they're aimin' at."

Then a great, clumsy blue-grey water buffalo, the draught beast of the island, disturbed in its accustomed pasture grounds by thundering guns and cracking shells, went lumbering across the common a short distance away. Its ugly snout was thrown forward, its great curved horns laid back against its shoulders. A shell plumped into the ground under its belly and, exploding instantly, blew the buffalo into ten thousand fragments.

"Furst casuality!" exclaimed Gorman. "Private Wather Buffalo of the Furst Battalion, Tamsui Blues, General Soon's heavy brigade. Turned into mince meat. Chewed and partly digested. Dead and mostly missin'."

The next instant it was:

"May the divil fly away wid that gunner! Fwhat the blazes does he mane by shootin' there? Does the omadhaun think that he has killed all the haythen Chinese in the island, that now he's thryin' to kill the Christian white people?"

A shell from the *Galissonnière* had passed in a great arc over his head. Its sound was that of a long-

drawn whine mingled with the rush of a sudden gust of wind. It exploded between the Girls' School and Dr. MacKay's house.

"If it's the Chinese he's tryin' to hit, I wud call that a mortial bad shot. I'll wait to see if that wan was only an accident, or if they're goin' to presint us wid anny more."

He did not wait long. Another rush and whine and a shell passed a little to his left, almost on a level with the spot where he stood and, exploding on the common just back of Thomson's bungalow, threw a cloud of earth high in the air.

That was enough. The red flag fluttered up to the top of the tall signal staff, from which it did not come down for more than twelve hours.

A moment later the consul came out of his house, accompanied by his wife and little daughter and a couple of native servants, to make their perilous way to the rendezvous. He glanced up at the danger signal:

"Are they at it already, sergeant?"

"They are, sir; the worse luck to thim. Make the best time you can, sir, an' march in open order."

"Thank you, sergeant. But don't you stay up there to be hit. You can't be of any more service now. Get to cover somewhere. You might be needed at the hospital."

"Very good, sir."

The consul's little group strung out along the narrow road following the brow of the hill past the two mission houses. As they came to Dr. MacKay's they saw the missionary pacing to and fro on his verandah. The consul called to him:

"Not very safe there, Dr. MacKay. I think you

had better do as the rest are doing, bring your family down into the shelter below the hill."

The missionary stopped his rapid, nervous pacing backward and forward, lifted his hat in salute, and replied:

"Thank you, Mr. Beauchamp. I have all the protection I need: 'Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night, nor for the arrow that flieth by day.'"

As they spoke a projectile drove deep into the ground of the garden between them, but did not explode. Undisturbed, the missionary resumed his walking up and down, while the consul hurried after his family. At their gate Mr. and Mrs. Thomson, accompanied by Dr. Sinclair, joined them.

"Run for it! Run!" Beauchamp shouted as the now familiar rush and moan of a shell was heard. The nimblest of them had hardly quickened their pace when it hit the very edge of the almost perpendicular cliff a few yards behind them, ricochetted at an angle to its original course, and plunged into the harbour. Without more ceremony they did run, stringing out until separated by wide intervals, turned sharply down the face of the hill by a narrow path and stone steps which led under some spreading banians, and in a few minutes were at the door of the rendezvous. The shells screamed through the air overhead, skipped along on the hard earth of the hills, or splashed into the river below.

"Wasn't that fun, daddy? You should have been able just to see you and mother run. It was better than a show."

The consul's little daughter was dancing and clapping her hands with delight.

"Not much fun that I could see, Constance," re-

plied her father grimly. "I prefer some other kind of a show."

"Oh, I like this best, father. And it would have been ever so much more fun if Mr. De Vaux had been with us. Wouldn't it have been great to see him run, hear him puff, and say, 'Bless my soul'?"

"That will do, Constance. It wouldn't have been very great if one of us had got blown up by a shell."

"But, daddy, we had Dr. Sinclair with us. He would have fixed us up."

"Sublime faith! By Jove! doctor, you have an admirer here who will not go back on you."

Sinclair laughed, slipped his arm around the little maid as she pressed to his side, ran his fingers through the heavy, dark-brown curls, smiled into those frank child eyes which looked so straight into his, and passed on to the hospital to join Drs. Black and Bergmann.

Meanwhile, Sergeant Gorman, coming from the consulate towards the town, had stopped to ask Dr. MacKay if there was any service he could render.

"From the way the Frenchmen are shootin', I do not expect that we'll have manny cases in the hospital, barrin' it may be some of ourselves, if there's anny of us left to patch the rest together. So I moight as well be doin' an odd job for you, if there's annything that would be of service to you."

"Nothing that I know of just now, sergeant! Nothing! We have made all the preparations we could think of. We are in the hands of God. But your offer is itself a service. I thank you."

A shell drove into the ground in a plantation of young banian trees just to the west of the house. Its explosion threw up a miniature volcanic eruption of gravel.

"Bedad, Dr. MacKay, I have been safer in manny a battlefield than we are at this very minute."

"'The Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strong rock, in Him will I trust.'"

"Thin, sir, you have better fortifications around you than a great manny of us have."

A petty officer from the *Locust* came up the garden walk, saluted, and said:

"Are you Dr. MacKay, sir?"

"I am."

"Commander Gardenier sent me to present his compliments, and to invite you to bring your family and your valuables and come on board the *Locust*. He says that you are in great danger here and that no place on shore is safe. A boat is waiting at the jetty, sir."

His words were interrupted by the weird moan of a shell, followed by an ear-splitting crack. The air was full of smoke and dust and flying fragments of metal and stone. It had struck a big boulder directly in front of the house, on the edge of the narrow road at the foot of the garden.

As they recovered from the shock, MacKay was speaking as quietly as if nothing had happened:

"Give Commander Gardenier my thanks. Tell him that I am deeply indebted to him for his thoughtfulness. Say to him that I have no valuables save these." He swept his arm around the semi-circle of native converts, preachers, students, and simple believers. "He could not accommodate all these. It is not his duty. They are subjects of China. But these are my valuables, my children in the Lord. Since I cannot take them with me, I shall stay with them."

"I shall tell him, sir."

The sailor saluted and withdrew.

When Sergeant Gorman told Sinclair of it at the hospital he said:

"I was born a Catholic, an' I'll die a Catholic. But whin I see that man up there on the hill an' thin think of that college in Skibbereen, an' the priests that have me little farm, that isn't mine neither, at Sleeahtbally-mackcurraghalicky, I'll tell ye it isn't the memory of the priests that kapes me a Catholic. It is because I am an Irishman an' I hate the name of a turncoat."

XXV

THE BALL PROCEEDS

"THIS is a sudden and unceremonious inroad of uninvited guests, Mr. MacAllister," said the consul as he entered. "Awfully sorry to crowd you so."

"There's no necessity for apologies, Mr. Beauchamp. We are only too glad to share with all any shelter or safety our situation may afford. Will you not stay and be as comfortable as the circumstances will allow?"

"Thanks, very much. I cannot stay just now. I see that you have every one from the hill except MacKay and his family and those who are at the hospital. But there are others who have taken refuge at Scott & Co.'s bungalow. I want to look in at the hospital, and then go on to Peeatow. I shall leave this party in your care and that of Boville. If it gets too hot here, signal Gardenier, and he will take you all on board. I shall be back in an hour."

He was off, following the narrow, crooked, rough-paved Chinese street, his quick, nervous step carrying him rapidly on his tour of inspection.

Mr. MacAllister went up to the living-rooms where the ladies were with De Vaux, Thomson the missionary, Clark the tea-buyer, Boville, Carteret, and practically the whole customs staff. The house never ceased shaking with the continual discharge of the cannon. Ever and anon the sharp splitting crash of a

bursting shell, some nearer, some farther away, gave the nervous a start. Less frequently could be heard, even within the house, the mingled whine and whirr of a passing projectile.

Not one of the ladies showed a sign of fear. Mrs. Beauchamp was quiet and self-controlled. Perhaps there was a trace of anxiety as her eye followed the light, fawn-like movements of Constance, or when she thought of her husband out trying to assure himself of the safety of others. But there was no fear. Mrs. MacAllister was at her best. Whatever her faults might be, timidity was not one of them. She belonged to a war-like people. Her colour was high. Her dark eyes shone with a strange fire. She looked a score of years younger than she was. Her husband was struck by the change in her. He found an opportunity to say:

"You look beautiful to-day, Flora."

"I am thinking of you, Hector. If you have to go out into danger, I want to go with you. Now I know why Allister would be a soldier. And I know what Jessie would mean when she says she wishes she wass a man. I nefer knew before."

She was deeply moved. The instinct of a fighting race had suddenly come to life with the sound of battle, and the accent of her childhood's speech was back upon her tongue.

She looked around for her daughter. Miss MacAllister was standing near a window, talking to Boville. She was drawn up to her full height, dwarfing the rotund commissioner of customs. Her cheeks were burning. Her eyes had an almost unnatural light. Her bosom was heaving with the short, quick

breath of one in struggle. Perhaps for the first time in her life Mrs. MacAllister understood her daughter's feelings. But she did not understand how much their interview of the day before had added to their intensity.

"Mr. Boville, I really cannot stay in here and not be able to see what is going on. I simply cannot. Let us go out on the verandah."

"Very well, Miss MacAllister. I do not know that it is any more dangerous there. I shall be glad to go with you."

"So shall I!" exclaimed Mrs. Thomson, whose natural vivacity had likewise been quickened by the excitement of the occasion. "I must go out. If there's any danger, let's take it in the open, and not shut up here like rats in a hole."

Her husband made a slow and feeble protest. But, with a half-defiant "You may hide in here if you want to," she ran out where she could get a view. Meanwhile, Constance Beauchamp danced in and out, bringing reports of what was to be seen to her mother, who remained sedately inside.

A heavy projectile splashed in the river midway between the company's jetty and the *Locust*. Another dropped on a cargo boat lying at the jetty, smashing through its bottom. The boat immediately filled and sank. A third drove into the soft mud of the shore close by and exploded, bespattering the whole vicinity with slime. There was a moan and rush nearer still, a shrill human shriek, a splitting crash, and a small native house spouted up a cloud of dust and splinters and fragments of sun-dried brick. Then it collapsed in a little heap of débris. In that heap were the bodies of an old Chinese peasant and his wife, and a little

child. The great guns of the French Republic's battleships had claimed some notable victims.

At the first sound of the shell Miss MacAllister and Mrs. Thomson were unceremoniously rushed into the house by Boville and De Vaux. The latter showed a presence of mind and courage in time of danger of which his excitability on ordinary occasions had given little promise. The shower of fragments rattled harmlessly on the roof and walls.

For a few minutes they appeared to be safe. But they did not have a long respite. There was a terrific crash and rending. The house shook as if in the grip of an earthquake. A great, gaping hole appeared in the back corner of the room on a level with the floor.

"Out on the verandah! Quick!" yelled Boville.

"Don't stop there! Bless my soul! To the far end!" echoed De Vaux.

With one exception all ran to the end of the verandah farthest from where they expected the explosion to take place. For a moment or two there was dead silence as hearts stood still in expectancy of the death-dealing shock. Then a quick step was heard running up the stairs and into the room they had left. The next instant Sinclair stepped out on the verandah.

"I hope no one was hurt," he said. "There is no immediate danger now. It's a dead one."

A heavy shell from the *Triomphante* had ricochetted from the hill behind, struck the back of the house just above the level of the floor of the room in which the refugees were, passed through the wall and floor, and landed amid the boxes of tea piled in the lower story. Dr. Sinclair was just entering the storeroom on the ground floor at that moment, and soon satisfied himself that it could do no more harm.

His assurance was received with a chorus of grateful exclamations. In the midst of them Mrs. MacAllister turned to Carteret and said:

"I am very glad to see, Mr. Carteret, that you are perfectly safe."

She had not failed to notice that he had been the first to reach a place of safety, and had ensconced himself in the corner farthest from the expected danger. She had got a glimpse of the man's character. She could forgive drunkenness and gambling, and some other things which need not be mentioned. These were the privileges of the nobility. But cowardice! She despised that. Her voice was icily cold when she said:

"I am very glad to see, Mr. Carteret, that you are perfectly safe."

Carteret's pale face, paler than usual, flushed. But with ready effrontery he carried himself through:

"Thank you, Mrs. MacAllister; I am very glad to see that every one is perfectly safe."

At that moment Sinclair's voice was heard saying:

"What's the matter in here? Was any one hurt?"

He stepped into the room again, followed by all the rest. From a dark corner came broken ejaculations, mingled with the names of the deity:

"Oh, God! Oh, God! . . . Lord! . . . Lord! . . . Oh, God, have mercy on my soul!"

Peering through the semi-darkness after the glare of the bright sunshine outside, they discovered Clark on his hands and knees under a heavy teak table.

"Hallo, Clark!" exclaimed Sinclair. "What are you doing there? Are you hurt?"

"Oh, God! . . . No! . . . We'll all be killed. . . .

Lord! . . . Lord! . . . The shell! . . . Oh, God! Have mercy on my soul!"

"Lord bless my soul!" exclaimed De Vaux in his high-pitched voice. "Is the man a coward?"

"Lord have mercy on my soul!" prayed Clark, under the table.

"My God! . . . This is disgraceful," stuttered De Vaux. "I never heard of the like. . . . Bless my soul!"

"Oh, God! . . . Have mercy on my soul!" echoed Clark.

"Sounds like a Free Methodist prayer-meeting!" remarked Sinclair, with a laugh, in which the rest joined.

"Mother, doesn't Mr. Clark get under the table and whine just like Carlo when father whipped him for keeping company with those nasty Chinese dogs?"

"Hush, Constance! Don't you say another word."

Sinclair reached under the table and began to pull Clark out:

"Come along, Clark! The Lord's going to give you another chance with that soul of yours. Perhaps you will have it in better shape by the time you get the next call."

When a few minutes later a boat from the *Locust* arrived to take all to the gunboat for greater safety, Clark found his legs with amazing expedition. Indeed, he would have been the first person in the boat if it had not been that Lieutenant Lanyon, who was in command, caught him by the collar and jerked him back on the jetty with the warning:

"Ladies first, sir, or by my faith you don't go at all."

Meanwhile on the exposed hill-top MacKay, his wife and children, and his Chinese converts, who had no souls, remained calm and unmoved amidst the ceaseless whirr and whine of the flying projectiles and the crash of bursting shells.

XXVI

A GAME OF BALL

DURING the afternoon the French fire slackened. By four o'clock it had died away to scattering shots. The party of refugees had spent most of the forenoon on board the *Locust,* had lunched at Peeatow, and now were back at their morning rendezvous. Some of the men had remained at Peeatow. Clark, the hero of the teak table incident, was not one of them. Evidently believing that a special divinity had been assigned to watch over the ladies, he kept very close to them, so that he might share in that divinity's protection.

Sinclair had spent the day at the hospital, though there was not much to do there. The all-day bombardment had wounded less than a score of Chinamen. But when he visited the rendezvous in the morning he noticed that Miss MacAllister seemed to avoid him. He was not the man to push himself in where he was not wanted, and so stayed away. But they met in the late afternoon. It was she who contrived it.

"Where is Miss MacAllister?" said Mrs. Beauchamp to that young lady's mother. "I have not seen her for some time."

"I really do not know. I had not missed her. But now that you mention it, I have not seen her since we came back. She may be in her room."

"Constance, would you go to Miss MacAllister's room and see if she is there?"

"Oh, no, mother, she is not in her room! I know. I heard her dare Mr. Carteret to have a game of tennis. She said that she would get Dr. Sinclair, too. She has gone away up to our place to play tennis."

"To play tennis!" both ladies exclaimed in horror.

"Yes," replied Constance. "Mr. Carteret did not want to go one bit. He was scared. I know. He tried to make all sorts of excuses. It was because he was so scared. I know. He looked just as frightened as he could look. But Miss MacAllister made him go. Isn't she dandy?"

"Constance, quick, run and ask your father to come here!"

When the consul heard what his wife had to tell, he uttered one brief, emphatic word, not loud but deep, grabbed his hat, and ran down the stairs. Breathlessly climbing the steep hill behind, he had just turned the corner of the customs compound when he heard the moan of a shell coming from the direction of the *Vipère,* which had moved from her former position and was lying well within the mouth of the river. It exploded in the air between the two mission bungalows. A fragment cut its way clean through the cottage roof of Thomson's bungalow, going in at one side and coming out at the other, leaving a great gaping hole in the tiles.

"By Jove!" said the consul to himself, "if that had been a percussion, or if the Frenchman had given it one second longer, Thomson would have been minus a house."

He caught a glimpse of swiftly-moving white figures on his lawn and quickened his pace. He called

a cheery greeting to MacKay as he passed and ran down into the little hollow between the missionary's house and his own. Just then he heard Sinclair's strong voice calling:

"Fifteen—love! . . . Thirty—love! . . . Forty—love! . . . Game!"

"What an expert! Just look at the cool, confident way he serves those balls. And we might as well try to stop a French shell with our rackets as return his service. Mr. Carteret, it's your service. Now play up or he'll win this set."

At that moment the consul ran through the gate in the hedge into the midst of the players:

"What the deuce is the meaning of this? Miss MacAllister? Dr. Sinclair?"

"Oh, Mr. Beauchamp, I'm so glad you have come! We needed another player to complete a doubles. Dr. Sinclair has been playing singles against Mr. Carteret and me. Won't you join in? There's a gentleman's racket on the settee right before you."

"Miss MacAllister, this is no time for fooling. I want to know what is the meaning of this. Carteret, you are a resident of the East and know what it means to disobey the orders of a consul. Why are you here and not at the rendezvous?"

"Ask the young lady," replied Carteret, with a shrug of his shoulders and a curl of his lip.

"Thanks, Adam! Since the blame is to be thrown back on Eve, she'll reply. I got tired of being stewed up in the house with men who crawled under the table whenever there was a hint of danger. So I came up here. Besides, I do not believe that it is nearly so dangerous here as there. Not a shell has come near us since we came, and I have not seen where one has

fallen about here all day. And, if they did start to shoot at us, Dr. Sinclair keeps us jumping about so lively after his balls that the Frenchmen could never hit us."

It took all Beauchamp's self-control to maintain the gravity of his countenance. But he managed it somehow, and answered as sternly as he could:

"This foolishness must stop. I'm responsible for your lives and I'm not going to have you stuck up here for targets."

"But, Mr. Beauchamp," was the nonchalant reply, "we have won the first set from Dr. Sinclair. He has very nearly won the second from us. It would be cowardly of us to run away now without giving him a chance to finish it. I'm sure Mr. Carteret would never consent to that. Mr. Carteret, it's your service. We must get moving or we all may be killed."

"I think, Mr. Beauchamp," said Sinclair, "that what Miss MacAllister says is about right. There really appears to be less danger here than down in the town. Whether or not the French gunners have respected the consulate, their shells have done little damage just here."

But the consul was not to be put off so easily:

"Miss MacAllister, Mr. Carteret, Dr. Sinclair, I command you to stop this game and to go down to the rendezvous."

"Mr. Beauchamp, may I ask you one question?" Her voice was almost infantile in its innocence.

"Certainly, Miss MacAllister. If it be a short one."

"You remember the Canadian Indian song Dr. Sinclair sang at the consulate the evening after we arrived? Was that really Indian?"

"How do you think I know? I never lived among the Indians. It was all Greek to me."

"That's exactly what I thought. It was Greek to me. Mr. Carteret, it's your service. Please play ball."

The consul gave a long, low whistle, shrugged his shoulders, and said to himself:

"So that's where the wind lies. I fancy I might as well let them fight it out."

Sinclair's face crimsoned at her words; then paled a little. His jaw set hard and he returned Carteret's service with such a volley that neither of his opponents, though ordinarily better players than he, had any chance. In a few minutes he announced abruptly:

"Game! Set!"

"Set—all! We must play the rubber. I suppose you are willing to have a deciding set, Dr. Sinclair?"

"Certainly, Miss MacAllister."

There was something in his face and voice she had never seen or heard there before. She looked at him curiously—a little anxiously.

They exchanged courts, Sinclair taking the north or exposed end of the lawn, while his opponents had the south end and were sheltered behind the fort.

The consul looked at them for a moment, then seized a racket and joined Sinclair:

"If you young people are bound to be fools, I suppose I might as well jump into it and be a fool, too. It may finish the set so much the quicker."

It was not a long one. Miss MacAllister played well. But her partner, Carteret, usually an expert at tennis, was nervous and playing wretchedly. On the other hand, Sinclair, who ordinarily served well but was weak on the return, completely excelled himself.

He drove his balls over the net with a savage strength which made his opponents' efforts to return them entirely hopeless. And on the return, where he was as a rule only moderately skilful, he let nothing pass him. Beauchamp played his usual swift, tricky, cheerful game.

The last game of the set had come. It was Sinclair's service.

"Play ball! . . . Fifteen—love!"

He crossed to his left-hand court and lifted his racket. There was a long whine, a rush of wind, and a terrific crash. A slanting black groove was scored across the green almost at Sinclair's feet, and the earth thrown high in the air.

"Down! Down! Everybody down!" yelled the consul.

"Play ball!" shouted Sinclair, and drove a vicious service at Carteret. "Thirty—love!" he continued, and strode back to his right-hand court to serve again.

But there was no use continuing the game. Carteret, who had flung himself on the ground, arose with a hanging jaw and ghastly face, and a nerve too shaken to play any more that day. Miss MacAllister had thrown herself on a settee at the end of the lawn, her face covered with her hands to shut out the sight. The consul, though he had shouted to the others to down, had remained standing himself. He was staring fixedly at Sinclair:

"Doctor, you beat the devil."

"Nothing to get excited about, Beauchamp! Percussion fuse! If it did not explode when it hit the corner of the fort, it wasn't likely to when it went into the soft soil."

"Yes, that's all right. But you hadn't time to work that out before you served again. Besides, it passed within a yard of where you were standing."

"Well, what if it did? A miss is as good as a mile. There was no use going up in the air about it."

"Look here, Sinclair. What the devil ever induced you to play this fool game, anyway?"

"I had to."

The consul looked at him in silence for a minute.

"Well, perhaps you had," he said slowly.

"I'll leave you to see those people back to the rendezvous, Beauchamp. Carteret may need a stretcher. I see that Miss MacAllister is quite able to walk. I'm going to MacKay's."

He turned to go. As he did so he heard Miss MacAllister pronounce his name. He thought that she was only saying a conventional farewell. He lifted his hat and said:

"Good-afternoon, Miss MacAllister."

Without looking in her direction he was gone.

XXVII

THE CHARGE OF THE TAMSUI BLUES

DURING the week which lay between the first and second bombardments, Dr. Sinclair and Miss MacAllister saw very little of each other. The doctor was busy. But that was not the main reason why he did not meet Miss MacAllister. The previous week, no matter how busy he was, he could always find time to meet her.

The fact was that circumstances had changed. He did not want to see her. Between the halcyon days of the previous week and the gloom of this one some painful episodes had occurred. The stormy interview between mother and daughter had taken place. In her indignation the young lady had determined to make it plain to everybody in general, and to Dr. Sinclair in particular, that she was not enamoured of him and was not offering her love where it had not been sought.

In some respects she succeeded beyond her expectations. Sinclair was convinced. More than that! He was convinced that all along she had been only playing him. That reference to the song he had sung at the dinner made assurance doubly sure. All through those days when she had been so fascinatingly kind she had only been leading him on so that her revenge might be the sweeter.

If Sinclair had been a melodramatic individual, he would probably have torn out whole handfuls of his

fair hair, thrown them two or three feet above his head in the direction of the high heavens, and raved some foolish and incoherent ravings, telling his wrongs to the winds and the wild waves, if they cared to listen. If he had been a profane person, he would have sworn picturesquely and would have asked Sergeant Gorman or some one else equally vigorous to kick him down the steep hill, on which the consulate was built, and up again for being a fool.

As he was neither melodramatic nor profane, he did neither of those things. He merely made up his mind in a cool, determined way that he would avoid Miss MacAllister as much as the narrow limits of their little community would allow, and when he was forced to meet her he would not grow enthusiastic over her, to say the least. When he met Gorman he did not ask to be kicked, but said:

"Look here, sergeant, there are going to be some lively times round here, or I'm no prophet. The French are not going to be satisfied with bombarding. And if they land a force and it comes to rifle-fire and perhaps the bayonet, there'll be some Chinese hurt."

"Right you are, docther. The shells don't take manny lives, barrin' thim that the noise scares to death. But the rifle bullets, they're the little divils that do the wurrk."

"Well, supposin' that you get leave again and we offer our services to General Soon to organize an ambulance brigade."

"I'm wid you, docther, from the drop of the hat."

So it came about that all that week Sinclair and Gorman were out on the wide commons in the vicinity of the Chinese camps, with squads of Chinese detailed for that service, to use General Leatherbottom's ex-

pression, "lickin' them into shape." Gorman gave them drill. Sinclair taught them how to splint and bandage, to put on a tourniquet and check the flow of blood, to make improvised stretchers and carry patients without irritating their wounds past recovery.

Soon the fair-haired "Life-healer" was nearly as well known and as popular among General Soon's yellow-skinned, slant-eyed hordes as he had become in Liu Ming-chuan's army before Keelung. But none of these Chinese soldiers knew how much of the training they received they owed to the fact that the "Red-haired Life-healer" had been badly used by the "barbarian girl" at a game of "phah-kiû," or strike ball.

One day Sinclair and Gorman were out as usual drilling their corps and training them in the principles of first aid. An exclamation of "Tai-eng-kok lâng" (British people) from some of their men caused them to look up. Passing them some distance away were Miss MacAllister and Carteret. The latter was carrying an easel, for among his accomplishments he included considerable skill in sketching and painting.

They were making their way towards a little eminence which commanded a magnificent view in all directions. Carteret had asked her to take a walk, that he might point out the beautiful scenery. She had accepted the invitation in the hope of meeting Sinclair, whom she had not seen since he had so abruptly left the tennis lawn.

"Fwhat the divil is the spalpeen takin' the lady there for, wid thousands of Chinese soldiers rampagin' around for some diviltry to do?"

Sinclair took one look, then lowered his head, and went doggedly on with his work, giving the Chinese ambulance corps a demonstration of how to splint a

A yell from one of the Chinese attracted the attention of Sinclair and Gorman

broken thigh. Gorman looked at him wonderingly for an instant; then without a word joined him, pulling the shortened leg out into position and explaining each movement in the vernacular.

Meanwhile, the prime danger to which Miss MacAllister and Carteret were exposed was not from the Chinese soldiers. A herd of water-buffaloes were feeding on the short grass of the downs. Docile as these huge beasts are with the little native herd boys, they are often exceedingly vicious towards strangers, especially those dressed in a style to which they are unaccustomed. Now they were irritated by the bombardment and frequent ill-usage by the soldiers.

At the sight of the man and woman in foreign dress they began to show signs of excitement. Crowding in a dense mass of blue-grey, hairless bodies, they moved in arcs of a circle, of which the centre was the object of their intended attack. Their ugly snouts were thrust forward on a level with their shoulders. Their great, curved horns lay back on their necks. They pressed closer and closer behind the two foreigners. Suddenly one enormous brute with a snort threw itself forward in a charge.

A yell from one of the Chinese attracted the attention of Sinclair and Gorman. Miss MacAllister had turned to face the beast, with the light walking-stick she carried upraised in her hand. Carteret flung his easel at it, but did not interpose himself between his companion and the danger.

With a shout Gorman sprang to his feet and started to run, waving a heavy stick in his hand. He had not taken a half-dozen paces when a rifle cracked behind him. A bullet sang past and the great blue beast plunged forward on its knees, then rolled over

on its side almost at Miss MacAllister's feet. Gorman glanced back. Sinclair was lying on the ground, in the act of throwing another shell into the breach of the rifle he held in his hands.

"Better go on, Gorman, and drive off the rest of the herd. You may have to escort these people home. It's not safe for them to be out."

With some shouts and a few resounding thwacks of his stick on their tough hides, Gorman drove off the buffaloes, and then turned savagely on Carteret:

"Tearin' ages! Fwhat in the name of all the saints possessed you to bring the young lady here? . . . Fwhat? . . . For a walk! . . . Faith, an' if it hadn't been for the docther here, God bless him!—it's a walk her young ladyship wud have been takin' to hivin and you to hell this very minnit."

"You make very fine distinctions, Sergeant Gorman," said Carteret sarcastically.

"Distinction, is it? Begorra, the only man that has come out of this wid distinction is Dr. Sinclair here. An' you had better be afther thankin' him that the angels and the divils are not this minnit holdin' a celebration over your two souls respectively."

In spite of the danger she had just passed through, this was too much for Miss MacAllister's gravity. Her merry peal of laughter rang out at the evident discomfiture of Carteret. It was with eyes dancing with fun as well as full of gratitude that she met Sinclair as he came to inquire courteously for her well-being. He received her warm thanks quietly and made light of his skill as a shot, which she praised so highly.

"I am only too glad to be of any service to you. As for the shot, that was nothing. I have been ac-

customed to hunting in Canada since I was a small boy. I had to learn to take sure aim and shoot quickly."

Carteret thanked him in courteous terms, but without warmth.

Sinclair did not wait for any further conversation.

"It is really not safe for you to be out here without an armed escort," he said; "when the country is so disturbed and there are so many camp-followers about. Even we who are in a sense in the Chinese service always carry arms. Sergeant Gorman will see you safely home. I am on duty here."

He did not mention the obvious fact that Sergeant Gorman was also on duty. But Miss MacAllister did not fail to notice it, and understood. She thanked him as bravely as she could, and turned away with her escort. But it was some time before even Gorman's quaint humours and repetitions could draw a laugh from her.

That was the only time Sinclair and Miss MacAllister met that week.

XXVIII

UNHOLY CONFESSORS

THAT evening De Vaux and Carteret sat in the latter's quarters in the buildings of the customs compound. There were a number of other occupants of the room. De Vaux and Carteret sat on chairs, at least they did during the earlier part of the evening. The others sat on the table. They were highly honoured and necessary guests. They consisted of sundry bottles of Scotch whiskey, a nearly equal number of bottles of soda, and a varied assortment of bottles of wine.

Carteret felt that he needed some comfort and sympathy after the exciting experiences of the day. He had called in the guests, who now sat on the table to comfort him. De Vaux, as being somewhat permanently installed in Carteret's quarters, was helping to entertain. Indeed, De Vaux had a singular facility in entertaining and being entertained by guests of this nature.

"A man needs something after such experiences as I have had those last few days," said Carteret, pouring out a glass of whiskey and starting to fill up with soda. "Talk about war! By Jove! I have been in more uncomfortable places in the last five days than I was in a whole campaign in Egypt."

"Not so much soda, Carteret! Not so much soda! . . . It spoils the flavour and weakens the effect. 'Pon my honour, it does! . . . If my nerves

are shaky and I want the taste to stay in my mouth, a little less than half soda is my rule."

"To the devil with the taste! There's lots more taste where this came from. But you're right. My nerves are all on the jump."

"The consul tells me that you had a narrow escape. Those infernal water-buffaloes! Bless my soul! I'm more afraid of a herd of them than a whole regiment of Chinese. . . . 'Pon my word, I am."

"So am I, the ugly brutes! And if the girl had got killed or injured there would have been the very deuce to pay. The consul and her father would have blamed me."

"The consul blames you as it is."

"Yes, that's the way with Beauchamp. He's an Englishman. But he's down on his own countrymen and his own class, and all for those damn boors of Canadians. He thinks more of MacKay and that upstart doctor than he does of a whole colony of English."

"Well, I shouldn't like to say that. Beauchamp has always been awfully decent with me. 'Pon my soul, he has! . . . But he is vexed at you. He says that you ought to be deported."

"Only wish he would deport me! Anyway, he can't till the next boat. And on it he's going to have to deport his wife and Mrs. Thomson and Miss MacAllister. That will hurt him worst of all. Don't you fret. There'll be no deporting by that boat, unless I deport myself."

"You are pressing your case with Miss MacAllister deuced hard. . . . How is it looking? You should have some results by this time. 'Pon my honour, you should!"

Carteret drained his glass and filled it again.

"The mother's with me. She knows that the heir has only one lung."

"And the father?"

"Says nothing one way or the other. Don't think that he is quite satisfied with my religious principles."

"Bless my soul! Could you blame him?"

"Not if he knew all about them. But, thank the Lord, he doesn't!"

Carteret laughed disagreeably, cynically as he spoke.

De Vaux took his cigar out of his mouth, blew a cloud of smoke into the air, and tipped his long glass so high that one might fancy that he feared lest even the moisture adhering to its sides should escape him. He set it down and wiped his lips with a sigh of satisfaction. Then he said:

"And what about the young lady herself?"

"An uncertain quantity."

"Has she given you no sign?"

"Signs enough sometimes that she wished I was in Jericho, or at the North Pole, or some other equally remote and cheerful place."

"Why? What's the matter?"

"Just at present she's taken with that Canadian peasant's muscles. Like the rest of the women, she is more attracted by the body of a man than by his birth or brains."

He laughed again, and his laugh was unpleasant to hear.

De Vaux gulped down another drink and answered with a little bit of angry stutter:

"You've said enough, Carteret. . . . By Jove! there are lots of decent women. . . . If you and I

haven't met many of them, it's our own fault. . . . 'Pon my honour, it is!"

"There may be. But they are not in the Far East. When I was in Shanghai, every woman in the settlement had her price, if you only knew what it was."

"I don't know what they are in Shanghai," replied De Vaux. "But I do know what they are in some other places, and I'll stake my honour on it they are not all like that. 'Pon my soul, they're not."

"Name one."

"Mrs. Beauchamp."

"Bound by conventionalities and kept in a glass case by her husband," sneered Carteret. "Get her out of that and she'd be just like the rest."

De Vaux struggled to his feet, his face purple, his voice choking with rage.

"Carteret," he stuttered in his high voice, "that's a lie—a damned lie! . . . If you don't take it back"—he shook his fist across the table—"if you don't take it back, by God, I'll expose you!"

Carteret paled, sat up in his chair, and took the pipe out of his mouth.

"Look here, De Vaux," he said, "don't make a confounded fool of yourself. One would think that you were the lady's husband. I didn't mean anything. I was only joshing."

"Well, that's a kind of joshing I don't like when it is about my friends. . . . 'Pon my soul, I don't!" replied De Vaux, settling himself back into his chair.

"All right, De Vaux, there'll be no more of it. What'll you have? . . . Let's break a bottle of champagne."

That was irresistible, and in a few minutes De

Vaux's good-humour was restored. Presently he said:

"So you have hopes of winning the fair MacAllister yet?"

"Sure of it when I get her away from here and can use the title as a bait."

"The title! Is it so near as that? Have you had any word?"

"Had word from my agent and solicitor by the last boat. My dearly beloved brother's cough is quite distressing. He has been ordered to Mentone for the winter. The agent does not think that he will ever get there. And, if he does, he's sure that he'll never get back. The old man is taking on about it. He's not at all in love with the idea of the succession of the heir presumptive. They do not think that he will live through the autumn. If October does not finish him, November will."

De Vaux had little reason to love his own parents and family, whoever they were. But the cynical heartlessness of Carteret grated on him. He turned the conversation a little:

"So you intend to leave the island soon?"

"By the next trip of the *Hailoong,* if the French do not bottle us up for the winter."

"And then you'll bring matters to a conclusion with Miss MacAllister?"

"Yes. Her people intend to spend the winter in Hong-Kong. So do I. If the old man and my beloved brother are only sufficiently obliging to depart in peace with reasonable expeditiousness, I shall be Lord Lewesthorpe. You know what that means in the colony. I haven't yet seen the tradesman's daughter who could resist. They are all falling over each

other in their willingness to exchange their money for a title. Quite envious of the preëminent success of their fair American cousins, as the newspapers say, in getting so many titles knocked down to them. The mother is ready to bid mine up. The decayed Lewesthorpe fortunes need the money more than I need the girl."

Drunk as he was getting to be, De Vaux was disgusted with the callousness of his companion. He sat silent for a few minutes, looking straight at Carteret out of his bulging, bloodshot eyes. Then he blurted out:

"Carteret, what are you going to do with the Chinese girl?"

"Nothing in particular," was the reply, with a cynical laugh. "Any of you fellows can have her, if you want her. If not, and the French take this beastly island, one of them will take her. They are generally ready for an *affaire d'amour*."

"And you are going to desert that Chinese girl and her child—your child—and let them go to the devil? And then you're going to ask Miss MacAllister to marry you, she of course knowing nothing of the other?"

"Of course. Why not? It won't hurt her so long as she doesn't know anything about it. If she does find it out afterwards, she can make the best of it. It would be the same if she married any other man."

"Carteret, you are a scoundrel. . . . 'Pon my soul! . . . That's what you are—a double-dyed scoundrel."

Carteret rose to his feet and faced De Vaux across the table. His face was pale and ugly:

"Come now, De Vaux. A little of that goes a long way. If I am a scoundrel, you are five times as much a scoundrel. For, if my arithmetic and memory are right, that is just the number of half-breed youngsters I counted in your house up river."

De Vaux stood for some moments gasping for breath and struggling to get control of himself. He was dangerously near the apopleptic fit which had been so often foretold for him. But he passed the danger point, recovered himself, and said:

"Yes, Carteret, your memory and your arithmetic were right. There *were* five. But they are all the children of one woman. And that woman, though she is a Chinese, is just as much my wife as things out here go as if the banns had been published and the service read. . . . 'Pon my honour, she is! . . . I am educating my children. They are safe in Hong-Kong at the present moment. . . . Bless my soul, I had a letter from the oldest by the last mail. . . . More than that, Carteret, since I have had that Chinese woman, I have never sought a white woman, and never intend to. . . . Thank God, I have a little bit of a man in me yet!"

"That's all old woman's sentiment, De Vaux. I didn't think you were such a molly-coddle. Wouldn't it make a furore in society if I was to take a Chinese tea-girl home to be the Countess of Lewesthorpe? I have none of your fastidious notions. I intend to have a woman suited to my position, and money to keep it up."

"And leave the girl and the kid."

"Yes."

"Then, by God, I'll have nothing more to do with you!"

And De Vaux meant what he said. But another bottle was broken, and then another. And when the dawn peeped in, De Vaux was stertorously slumbering on a long bamboo and rattan chair, and Carteret was hidden under his mosquito curtains.

XXIX

FLAGS OF TRUCE

"LOOKS as if we might have something doing to-day, sergeant. I shouldn't be surprised if we should have an interesting day. What do you make of those boats away there to the north?"

"Transports, docther. They're not men-o'-war, and what else could merchant ships be doin' there except waitin' for a chanst to land soldiers?"

"I wonder where the other warships are. I can make out only the *Galissonnière* and the *Vipère*."

"Maybe they're close in shore, behind that hill yonder. If they are goin' to put a landin' party ashore, they'll be needin' to cover it."

It was the eighth of October, six days after the previous bombardment. Sinclair and Gorman were, as was their custom, on the top of the Dutch fort, trying to foresee what might be the developments of the day.

The morning wore on until nine o'clock. Suddenly spirts of flame shot out from the two French warships which were in sight, and the thunder of their guns mingled with the distant boom from others which were hidden behind the northern hills. A transport appeared close to the shore, near the last stretch of beach visible from the fort. Another was probably hidden by the hills. The rattle of the machine guns covering the landing of the troops filled up the intervals between the booming of the big guns.

At the first report the consul joined them on the lookout. Boville, MacAllister, Commander Gardenier, and one or two others came later. With the consul's permission, Gorman left to personally superintend the work of his ambulance corps, of which he was very proud.

"Don't let the Chinese mistake you for a Frenchman," called Sinclair after him. "The Hakkas might fill you with slugs from their old match-locks."

"Faith, an' it's a poor opinion you have of their intilligence, to say nothin' of the insult you're offering meself," was the reply of Gorman, as he ran down the stair.

"There's the first load!" exclaimed the consul, as a boat filled with troops pulled from the transport to the beach.

Boat after boat followed, discharging their cargoes of armed men, who formed up on the beach and then marched away out of sight behind a spur of hills. Soon the volleys of rifle-fire joined the crash of machine guns in forming an interlude between the thunder of the cannon.

An hour passed away. As a week before, most of the residents of the hill-top had repaired to the rendezvous at MacAllister, Munro Co.'s. But the consul and his companions were still on the top of the fort.

"There comes the first of the Chinese wounded," said Sinclair. "It's some of Gorman's corps who are carrying him. I can see the red cross."

A moment later he said:

"There come more. The French must be doing some execution. There are already more wounded in sight than we had all day last Thursday. It's the rifle-fire which counts."

Singly or in groups, the squads of stretcher-bearers could be seen filing across the common on their way to the Mission Hospital.

"I must go now. We are going to have our hands full."

"Down! Down!" roared Gardenier.

Every one fell flat behind the battlements. There was a crash and the old fort trembled to its foundations. They sprang to their feet and looked over. A shell had struck it squarely a few feet above the ground. But the solid brick walls, eight feet thick, built by conscientious workmen two hundred and fifty years before, had hurled it back and were hardly even dented by the terrific impact.

Soon afterwards Sinclair left for the Mission Hospital down in the town. There he joined Dr. Bergmann in time to receive the first of the wounded. But they came so fast that before long the two doctors had to signal for Black of the *Locust*. As the afternoon came on the number increased. The hospital was small, and soon not only the operating-room and the wards, but the courtyard as well, were crowded with between one hundred and twenty and one hundred and thirty wounded men.

The forenoon passed into the afternoon; the afternoon wore slowly away. Up and down between the lines of rude plank cots the three doctors moved, with bare arms and clothing stained with blood. Several of the Christian students acted as nurses and assisted at the dressings.

The noon hour had passed, but they took no time for lunch. A messenger arrived from the rendezvous with an invitation from Mrs. Beauchamp and Mrs. MacAllister to go there for tiffin.

"I fancy that we had better accept this," said Black. "We have more time now than we shall have later. But these are slaughter-house clothes in which to go to tiffin with ladies."

"Das ist true," replied Bergmann. "Ve vill slip in mine house and vill get some clothes. I can fit Dr. Black. But Dr. Sinclair, I know not. He ist so big."

"That's all right, Bergmann. Somebody has to stay here and look after those fellows. You two go ahead and have tiffin. Present my compliments and regrets. If there is not too big a rush when you come back, I'll have something then."

His two confrères hastened away. Sinclair went on with his work silently, swiftly, determinedly. Again the pain-drawn faces appealed to him. Again the wistful eyes followed him. Again the word passed from lip to lip, "I-seng lâi" (The Life-healer comes).

Some belonged to regiments which had been in the camp before Keelung and had known him there. Some had come to know him during their ambulance work of the past week. Some had heard of him. Some were mainland men from the North, speaking a different tongue. But all caught the phrase, and from every plank bed he heard the word passed to the next, "I-seng lâi" (The Life-healer comes). And he worked on.

Presently Bergmann and Black returned, and with them a blue-jacket of the rendezvous guard, with a pressing invitation for him to go for tiffin. He looked at the invitation; then at the ever-increasing number of suffering men:

"Give my thanks to the ladies who sent you and

say from me that there are so many wounded here now that I cannot find it in my heart to leave them. I can do very well without food till dinner-time."

"Very good, sir. I shall tell them."

The blue-jacket saluted and withdrew. Sinclair went on with his work.

A half-hour passed. Again the blue-jacket appeared accompanied by a native bearing on his carrying-pole a pair of the many-storied bamboo baskets in which the Chinese convey warm provisions.

"A chit for you, sir."

He took the note the sailor handed him and glanced at the address. It was in an unfamiliar feminine hand. Opening it quickly, he read:

"Will Dr. Sinclair be so good as to accept the accompanying refreshments from me?

"Jessie MacAllister."

In spite of the mood of intense concentration which was always on him when he was at work, in spite of his rigid self-control, a slow flush showed in his face, doubtful under the tan, but certain when it climbed above the border-line of the sunburn. It was not so much the act, though that in itself would have been enough to quicken his pulses. It was the form of the brief epistle. She had started to write a purely formal note, but had ended by making it warmly personal. . . . "From me. Jessie MacAllister."

"I have no paper on which to write an answer, except a leaf out of a pocketbook. You will have to make apologies for me."

"I shall do my very best, sir," replied the sailor, with a grin, as he took the hastily-scribbled note of thanks, for the big, kindly doctor had, without an

effort, got the good-will of this man, as he did of nearly every man his life touched.

Sinclair hastily swallowed several cups of tea, ate a piece of chicken, and, telling his student assistants to distribute the rest among the wounded, turned again to his work of mercy. But all the while four words kept writing and re-writing themselves upon his brain: "From me. Jessie MacAllister."

It was the first time that he had seen her full name written. It had always been "Miss MacAllister." Certain definite pictures had been formed in his mind with which that appellation was connected. Sometimes stately and magnificent, sometimes teasing and whimsical; sometimes kind, sometimes cruel; those clear-cut portraits were connected inseparably with the name "Miss MacAllister." But some way "Jessie MacAllister" was different. It suggested something more intimate, more confidential, more tender than the other had ever done. What could it mean?

Again and again he asked himself that question: "What could it mean?" Was she only playing with him? The week before the last bombardment she had been exceedingly kind. Then she had suddenly turned and treated him cruelly. Was she trying the same trick again? His jaw set and his lips closed tightly. She wouldn't catch him like that again.

But another thought would pass through his mind. This was different. There was something about this two-line note which he had never experienced before. . . . "From me. Jessie MacAllister."

Sinclair had made up his mind resolutely after that tennis game that he would not put himself in the way of receiving such treatment again. When he set his mind to anything, he was firm to the verge of stub-

bornness. He knew that. And with all the stubbornness of his nature he had resolved to have nothing more to do with Miss MacAllister than the laws of politeness required.

But somehow "Jessie MacAllister" did not seem just the same. Do his best, he could not be indignant and angry with her in the same degree as he had been with "Miss MacAllister." He knew that the fortifications of his resolution were shattered. He knew that the four words, "From me. Jessie MacAllister," had made a breach in them. They had been standing not quite a week.

Strange to say, the thought that they were broken, and the means by which it was effected, gave him a secret pleasure, a sense of lightness and exultation such as he had not felt for six whole days. To be consistent with himself, to maintain his self-respect and reputation for firmness, he made a pretence at repairing the breach and rebuilding the fortifications. But all the while the two-line note with its signature was stowed away in an inner pocket, which had an intimate relation to the spot beneath which his strong heart beat a little faster than usual. With a new hope and enthusiasm he toiled on among the wounded all the rest of the day. But the toil was light and the afternoon sped away.

Meanwhile, the bombardment had come to an end. The French attack had failed. Entangled in a maze of swampy rice-fields, their landing-party had been fiercely attacked by the Chinese. They were compelled to retreat to their boats, carrying their wounded with them, but abandoning their dead.

The wild Hakka tribesmen with General Soon's army, following the practice they had learned in bor-

der warfare against the Malay savages of the hills, had cut off the heads of the fallen French soldiers and exposed them on poles at the Chinese camp and in the market-place of Tamsui. Consul Beauchamp and Commander Gardenier had indignantly protested to General Soon. The Chinese commander had at once ordered that the bodies and heads of their fallen foes should be buried and promised that it should not occur again.

But the danger of the situation to the European residents and visitors had been revealed. While General Soon and many of his officers and men were deeply grateful for the services rendered by the Mission Hospital, the doctors, and Sergeant Gorman's ambulance corps, the foreigners stood in serious peril. A great European nation, a first-class military power, had been beaten back by the Chinese in an attempt to capture Tamsui. The savage instincts of the irregular and undisciplined levies of the Chinese army had been aroused by their success. There was no knowing the hour when these would break out in a general massacre. The consul resolved that all foreign women and children, and such of the men as duty did not compel to stay, should leave the island at the first opportunity.

XXX

THE MYSTERY OF LOVE

A DAY or two after the second bombardment the *Hailoong* again appeared off the harbour. The French detained her long enough to satisfy themselves that she carried no munitions of war, and then allowed her to enter the port. Nearly the whole foreign community was at the dock to receive her. It was only thirteen or fourteen days since she had been there before. But to those who had been in the midst of war's alarms it seemed as many weeks.

Of course, Sinclair was there to give McLeod a hearty greeting. There was little time to talk, as the chief officer had to oversee the discharging of the cargo. Sinclair joined him in this, his knowledge of the ship and of conditions ashore making his assistance most valuable. He had his countryman's knack of turning his hand to anything. By the afternoon they had so rushed the work that they were able to knock off and have a comfortable chat in the dining saloon.

After they had discussed the bombardment and the landing, the prospects of more fighting and the possibility of a blockade, and had laughed till their sides ached at the oddities and eccentricities brought out by the unusual situation, McLeod said suddenly:

"Say, Doc, you have not told me anything about the Highland girl. How is she?"

"Just as big a conundrum as ever, Mac."

"What! Have you not been getting along well?"

"No! I don't know where I'm at."

"Why? I thought from the way she spoke of you, and the way she received you when you came back from Keelung, that things were bound to go like a house on fire."

"Well, Mac, for a few days I was feeling pretty good myself. I thought that I was making great progress. But the day of the first bombardment my castle in the air was blown sky-high and there has hardly a fragment of it come back to earth yet."

He then told of the tennis game and of how disgusted with himself he had been. To his surprise McLeod did not take it very seriously. He expressed concern at Sinclair's narrow escape from the shell, but rather laughed about the rest of the incident, especially at his friend's having left the lawn in a tantrum, as he called it.

"You would have been madder than I was," retorted Sinclair, "if you had been in my place."

"Of course I should—if I had been in your place, because like you I should not have looked for the right reason for her actions—that is, if I had been in your place."

"I don't understand what you are driving at," said Sinclair, with a trace of irritation.

"It's all right, Doc. Never mind now. Go on and tell us some more."

When Sinclair related the incident of the "charge of the Tamsui blues," and Gorman's remarks to Carteret, McLeod laughed so heartily that the doctor had to join him.

"It's all very well for you to laugh like that," he said, a little ruefully, when McLeod stopped for a

moment. "You have nothing at stake. But it's different with me."

"You'll laugh about it yet, just as heartily as I have done. Probably more so. Haven't you another yarn up your sleeve? I know that you have. Go on. Give us another."

He did. He told about Clark praying under the teak table, and De Vaux dancing and stuttering around it. Sinclair was a good story-teller, and before he was through with the Free Methodist prayer-meeting McLeod's laughter could be heard the length of the ship. Sinclair had forgotten his love troubles, and his laugh, mingled with his chum's, was as rollicking and care-free as that of a schoolboy.

In the midst of it Captain Whiteley's voice was heard outside:

"What in the world's going on in here?"

A lady's voice replied:

"It's those two lovers. They should never be separated. Either one is quite inconsolable without the other."

The door was pulled open, and the two young men, vainly endeavouring to choke down their laughter, rose to receive Miss MacAllister, her father, and the captain.

The two men did not remain long. Mr. MacAllister wanted to take Captain Whiteley to see some of the damage wrought by the shells. A few minutes after they left McLeod suddenly remembered that there were some duties connected with discharging or taking cargo which he had to attend to at once. Almost before they knew, Sinclair and Miss MacAllister were left alone.

For some moments neither spoke. Ordinarily both

were good conversationalists, able to acquit themselves with credit in any company. But now, left to each other's company, each seemed suddenly bereft of speech. Sinclair probably never thought so quickly on any other occasion in his life. But with all his thinking he entirely failed to think of anything to say. If he had thought of anything, it is doubtful if he could have said it. His heart was pounding so hard and fast that he experienced a slight suffocating sensation. But he didn't open the door. He had that much presence of mind. He didn't open the door to let the outside air or any one else in. Though speechless, he was not bereft of reason.

It was Miss MacAllister who first recovered.

"Dr. Sinclair," she said, "I want you to forgive me."

Then Sinclair began to wonder what she had done that he should forgive. Could she ever have done anything for which she needed to ask his forgiveness?

"But, Miss MacAllister," he stammered, "what—what am I to forgive? You never did anything——"

"Oh, Dr. Sinclair, you know that I did. Last Thursday; you remember. I acted shamefully, and" —there was a little break in her voice—"I nearly caused you to be killed. . . . Can you ever forgive me?"

"I could forgive you anything."

"But you were very angry. You went away angry, and when I tried to call you back you wouldn't stop to speak to me. I wanted to ask your forgiveness then."

"Miss MacAllister, I suppose that I was angry. It is I who ought to ask your forgiveness. . . . I didn't

mean to be angry. But I felt hurt. . . . You had been so kind just before that day. . . . I was foolish enough to hope that you would continue to be kind. But when that day came you were different, and it hurt. . . . Miss MacAllister, I can't keep it back. I love you. . . . That's why it hurt."

She was sitting by one of the small windows of the saloon, with one arm resting on its sill. Through the conversation she had kept her head lowered. As his accents grew warmer, she turned towards the window, and seemed to be gazing on the water, which the northeast monsoon, driving against the current, was raising in choppy waves. He had risen and was standing in front of her. He could not see her averted face, and she made no answer.

"I know that it must seem absurd and presumptuous of me. I'm a poor and unknown missionary doctor. But I love you. . . . I tried not to. But I couldn't help it. . . . I resolved never to mention it to you. . . . But we were left alone here together and—I just couldn't help myself. . . . I had to tell you."

Without turning her face, she extended her right hand to him. He caught it in his and, dropping on one knee, pressed his lips to it.

"I'm glad you told me, Donald."

For a moment he could hardly believe his ears. He looked up in a dazed, wondering fashion. Her face was no longer averted. Shy, blushing, but smiling, it was turned towards him, and their eyes met. Almost incredulously, wonderingly he asked:

"Do you mean that?" (He did not dare say her name.)

"Yes, Donald."

He bowed his head again over the hand he held, and felt her other hand laid softly, timidly on his wavy masses of fair hair. For a few moments it rested there like a benediction. When she lifted it he rose and, turning her face up to his, gravely, reverently pressed upon her lips the sacramental kiss of pledged love.

For a time they sat silent. His arm was around her. Her head was on his shoulder. Her forehead and the crown of rich brown hair were touching his cheek. Neither wanted to speak. Each was trying to comprehend the mystery of love, the mystery of two souls who had held aloof from each other, and had fenced with each other, and had strenuously asserted their independence of each other. But all the time they had been restless and dissatisfied. Then suddenly and unexpectedly they had been forced to confess that they could not be happy apart. And immediately in that confession they had found joy unutterable. Over and over again it passed through their minds. And when they were done they understood it no more than when they began. But they knew the fact.

At length he said:

"Jessie, where did you learn my name?"

She slipped her hand into her bosom and drew out a leaf torn from a pocketbook. It was his note of thanks for the refreshments she had sent to the hospital. It was signed, "Donald Sinclair."

"And where did you get mine, Donald?"

From an inner pocket close to his heart he brought out her note ending with the words: "From me. Jessie MacAllister."

"If it had not been for those four words, I do not

think that I could ever have had the courage to tell you that I loved you."

"I'm so glad that I wrote them. I tried to end that note in formal fashion, but, before I knew, I had written those words. I sealed it in a hurry for fear I should think twice and change them." Her face was hidden against his breast now. . . . "And—I know you will think me silly—after the blue-jacket left, I ran out to call him back. . . . But I was too late."

"That's once I can thank God for a person's being late," he said, as he lifted her face to his own and kissed her again, but with more of the passion and abandon of love than before. And the wonder of it grew upon him. Over and over again he kept asking himself, Was this the proud young beauty of whom he had stood in awe? Was this blushing, tender girl yielding herself to his embraces and responding to his kisses,—was this the sprightly, mischievous belle of the dinner party who had teased him, and made game of him, and held him up to be laughed at by the assembled guests? It was almost incredible. But it was true. And the mystery of love deepened.

They were silent for a while. Thoughts were too busy and too happy for speech. Then she said:

"Donald, I know that this will sound awfully improper. But I do not want mother to know of what has taken place for some time. She would be so disappointed and angry that she would make rash statements. And afterwards, even if she were convinced that she had been wrong, she is so determined that she would not go back on them."

"I was afraid that she did not like me, Jessie."

"It is not that she dislikes you. It is because she is ambitious that I should marry a man with a title."

"Carteret, for example," said Sinclair, with a smile.

"Yes, Carteret. And I hate him," she replied, with a flash of indignation. "I shudder every time he comes near me. But mother has accepted him as a suitor. She has not been so taken with him of late, since the first bombardment, and especially since the charge of Sergeant Gorman's Blues. She knew that he played the coward both times. But that is all forgotten again. He has the title."

"What! Has Carteret succeeded to the title?"

"Yes. He got word by the *Hailoong's* mail. The heir with the one lung died of hemorrhage while crossing the Channel. His father died of shock when he was told of it. Carteret is now Lord Lewesthorpe. With mother the title has blotted out all his sins. She is more insistent than ever."

"Jessie, if Carteret bothers you, I'll wring his neck, and the Lewesthorpe title can go looking for another heir."

"Oh, no, Donald, you mustn't!" she said, in a little alarm, as she felt the big muscles against which she leaned swell with sudden passion. "You mustn't. Leave it to me. Mother is determined. But I can be determined, too. And father will not let me be pushed too far."

"I'll do whatever you want."

"Thank you, Donald. If mother knew now that I had let you speak to me of love, she would never forgive me. But she will change. There is something coming which will change her. I do not know what it is. But I know that it is coming. We are Highland, you know. It is the second sight."

The lovers sat for a while longer. Then she looked at her watch:

"Oh, Donald! Do you know that we have been here nearly two hours?"

"It seemed to me like five minutes," was the reply.

She gave a merry laugh and said:

"If time always passes so quickly, we'll be old before we know."

"I wish that I could be sure that the days after you leave would only pass as quickly," he said, a trifle sadly.

"They'll pass, Donald. I'll be thinking of you, and you'll be thinking of me, and the days will go. But what will Mr. McLeod be thinking of us, that we have stayed here so long? And isn't it strange that none of the Chinese boys ever came into the saloon in those two hours?"

Sinclair laughed his happy, boyish laugh.

"Trust McLeod!" he said. "Probably he could explain the prolonged absence of the boys, as well as his own."

She looked at him archly.

"I am not sure now that I have done wisely in giving you my undivided love, Donald. I am afraid that I am not getting the same in return. I am really jealous of Mr. McLeod."

The method of his reply need not be described. She was satisfied with it. And when they stepped out and met McLeod on the deck he knew without being told.

XXXI

ANCESTORS AND PEDIGREES

THE last night of the stay of the MacAllisters in Tamsui had come. They were to sail for Hong-Kong on the *Hailoong* the next day. With them were going Mrs. Beauchamp and Constance, Mrs. MacKay and her children, Mr. and Mrs. Thomson, Carteret, Clark, and a number of others of the foreign community. The consul had ordered that all the foreign women and children should leave North Formosa. A number of the men who had no taste for the scenes and chances of war were going with them. Mr. MacAllister feared the possibility of a blockade and so chose to go to Hong-Kong, where he could freely prosecute his search.

As there had been on the evening after their arrival, so there was the evening before their departure a dinner at the consulate. This time the guests left early. Many of them were preparing for a hasty departure. They knew that their hostess had likewise much to occupy her time for the few remaining hours.

Sinclair had gone on board the *Hailoong* to have a farewell talk with McLeod. Sergeant Gorman, who had been dining with the second officer and the second engineer, joined them by their invitation. They were sitting on the after deck, sheltered from the raw wind of the northeast monsoon. The conversation drifted from point to point of recent events. McLeod and Sinclair led Gorman on to tell in his inimitable way

incident after incident, while they laughed like a pair of schoolboys out on a frolic.

"You never told me, sergeant, how you got along with Miss MacAllister and Carteret the day you saw them safely home after the charge of the Tamsui Blues."

Gorman cocked an eye at Sinclair, with an expression which was irresistibly comical.

"I knew that it wud come," he said. "You did nobly, docther. You held your whisht for a full week. But I knew it wud come."

"That's all right, Gorman," replied Sinclair, laughing to hide a little confusion. "That's all right. But that's not the subject under discussion. You tell us how you enjoyed your walk."

"How did I enjoy it? How could I do anything else but enjoy it, wid the young lady talkin' to me, and askin' me questions about me experiences in the wars, an' about the camp and the hospital at Keelung; and the two bright eyes of her lookin' at me so friendly loike. Fwhat kind of a man wud I be that wudn't enjoy it?"

"So the young lady talked to you all the way home?" said McLeod.

"Yes," said Gorman with a wink at McLeod, which distorted all one side of his face, "she didn't know that I was a married man."

McLeod laughed gaily at Sinclair. The latter took Gorman's banter good-naturedly. He could afford to be indulgent.

"How did Carteret take your monopolizing her?" he asked.

"He tould me that it wud become me to have less to say in the prisince of me betters. 'Begorra,' sez

I, 'barrin' her young ladyship here, there's none of them prisint that I can see,' sez I. 'An' whin it comes to savin' young ladies from General Soon's Tamsui Blues, be the powers I haven't been seein' me betters around here, exceptin' Docther Sinclair, may the angels make his bed in glory,' sez I. Wid that the young lady fires up and sez, 'The divil a bit of it,' sez she. 'We don't want the doctor to go to glory yet,' sez she."

"What! What! What's that, Gorman!" exclaimed McLeod, while Sinclair was fairly shrieking with laughter. "You don't mean to tell us that Miss MacAllister said that—'the divil a bit of it.' Did she say that?"

"Och, Mr. McLeod, now you're spoilin' me story. If she didn't say that in so manny wurrds, she thought it annyway. An' fwhat's the difference? But I'll take me affydavit on it that she did say that she didn't want the docther here to go to glory yet. An' I'm jist tellin' the docther for his comfort, for be that sign, they were very encouragin' wurrds."

"Did Carteret try to sit on you again?" inquired Sinclair when they ceased laughing.

"He did. 'Sergeant,' sez he, 'you're too free with your tongue. Your company is offensive,' sez he. 'You may consider your services dispensed with. And I shall consider it my duty to report you to the consul.' 'Bedad,' sez I, 'if you had been a little freer wid your courage, you wudn't have needed me company. As for me services,' sez I, 'I'm not under your orders. I was sint to see this young lady safely home,' sez I. 'An' I cudn't think of lavin' her in your care, for fear you might chanst to meet a field-mouse by the way, an' you moight run, an' lave

her to be devoured by the feroshus wild beast,' sez I.

"Wid that the young lady tuk to laughin' an' laughed so that I cudn't finish wid the spalpeen for sayin' that he'd report me to the consul. I was jist goin' to be afther tellin' him that afther a consultashun together wid the consul, I had decided to deport him from the island. But the young lady sez, sez she, 'Mr. Carteret, if I wish to talk to Sergeant Gorman, I do not see why you should object. I hope that you will not interfere with him again, and I'm sure that Sergeant Gorman will not say anything more to offend you.'"

"Then the rest of your walk was quite peaceful and agreeable," said Sinclair.

"It was," replied the sergeant. "You see the young lady and I talked all the rest of the way. An' that spalpeen of a Carteret was as paceful as you plase, walkin' on the other side of her, kind of sulky an' hang-dog loike, for niver another wurrd did she say to him."

"You must have enjoyed it, for I never before knew you to take so long a time on so short an expedition."

"Och, docther, I wudn't have thought it of you. But seein' that it's troublin' you, I'll just make your moind aisy by tellin' you that I wasn't wid the young lady all the toime. Part of it I was wid her mother."

"Did Carteret tell her mother what had really happened?" asked McLeod.

"I hadn't the honor of hearin' what he did tell her. But she wasn't jist taken wid it, for she asked me to wait, an' afther the spalpeen was gone, she tould me to step in, for she wanted to have some

conversashun wid me. 'Wid pleasure, ma'm,' sez I. 'Sergeant,' sez she, 'are these water-buffaloes dangerous to people?' 'That all depinds on the people,' sez I. 'But are they not very ferocious beasts?' sez she. 'Ag'in that depinds,' sez I. 'If there's a bit of a shillelagh wid a man behind it, they're as p'aceful as lambs in spring-time. But if there's nothin' but a paint-brush, wid a good-for-nothin' omadhaun at the back of it,' sez I, 'thin they bate Bengal tigers.'

"Wid that she got very red. 'Mr. Carteret's a gentleman,' sez she. 'Maybe,' sez I. 'He's well-born,' sez she. 'The divil,' sez I."

"You would say that," interrupted McLeod.

"Och, Mr. McLeod, there you'd be afther spoilin' me story agin. An' now that you call it to me moind, I didn't say that nayther, seein' that it was a lady I was talkin' to. Fwhat I did say was this, that I didn't know that he was anny better born than the rest of us; an' though I did not remember much about the occasion, I always onderstood that me own mother, considerin' her opportunities, had brought me into the wurrld jist about as nately as a duchess could have done.

"Wid that she gave a bit of a laugh, an' sez, 'No doubt, Sergeant Gorman! But I didn't mean it just that way,' sez she. 'I meant that his ancestors have been men of rank and noble birth for generations.' 'As for that,' sez I, 'I don't take much stock in me pedigree,' sez I. 'A man don't go far wid his ancesthors till he foinds wan he'd loike to trade off for some wan else. But seein' that they are both dead an' done wid, he can't do it convaniently. To illustrate, I'll jist tell your ladyship how it happened to mesilf,' sez I.

" ' Wanst whin I was in Indy, I tuk it into me moind to go home to Ireland an' hunt up me ancesthors. I came to me birthplace, Sleeahtballymackcurraghalicky in County Cork, an' tould the ouldest man in the place who I was an' what was me business. " Yis," sez he, " yis; I don't know you; but I've hard of you, an' I knowed your fader. Your name is John Gorman. Your fader's was Shon Jay Pay. His fader was Shon Mor. An' his fader was another Shon who was hanged by the English for bein' a Rory of the Hills." An', ma'am,' sez I, ' wud you believe me, I didn't pursue me ancesthors anny farder—shure as I'm a livin' man. I didn't pursue me dead an' gone ancesthors anny farder.'

" ' But,' sez she, wid a little laugh, ' Mr. Carteret's ancestors were not like that. They were noblemen. His father is an earl. His oldest brother is the heir. But his father is an old man, and cannot live long, and the heir has only one lung, and when he dies, Mr. Carteret will succeed to the title and the estates.' ' Well, ma'am,' sez I, ' if it's my opinion you want, it's this. The heir shud trade off his wan lung wid an auctioneer for his two, an' give him £100,000 to boot. For it's little honor will be done to the title, an' little profit to the estates, if that spalpeen of a Carteret gets thim,' sez I, ' beggin' your ladyship's pardon for talkin' so freely in your prisince.'

" Thin she got very red agin. Afther a bit she sez, ' Thank you, Sergeant Gorman, for your opinions,' sez she. ' Here's a guinea for you.' ' Thank you, ma'am,' sez I, ' but I'm nayther a lawyer to be sellin' me gab for money, nor a beggar to be takin' charity,' sez I. ' I'm the son of an Irish gentleman.' Wid that she looked at me kind of curious loike, an' sez,

'Pardon me, Mr. Gorman, for offering it to you. But just the same I want to thank you for your services to my daughter and to me,' an' she reached out her hand an' shook hands wid me rale friendly loike."

When Sinclair, McLeod, and Gorman separated that night, Sinclair saw before him the possibility of a change of attitude on the part of Mrs. MacAllister towards Carteret and himself.

XXXII

A MAN AND A WOMAN

THE day of departure had come. The *Hailoong* was floating on a full tide, ready to cast off. Those who were remaining were down to bid farewell to those who were going. Impedimenta had been stored away, and all had gathered in two groups on the promenade deck. Dr. MacKay, his wife and children, Mr. and Mrs. Thomson, and a number of native students and preachers, formed one group. The Beauchamps, the MacAllisters, Commander Gardenier, Boville, Carteret (for the residents still called him by the name by which they had known him all along), and most of the young men of the customs and mercantile staffs, formed the other.

Dr. Sinclair, who had been busy helping in the hasty preparations for departure, walked forward along the side of the deck next the dock. Miss MacAllister disengaged herself from the little group and stepped to the rail, as though to watch the last incidents of the embarkation. They met on the very spot where they had stood that memorable evening on which the *Hailoong* put out from Amoy to face the capricious seas of the Channel.

What a change had come in their relations! They knew that many eyes were watching them. Their words, if spoken above a whisper, would be audible. There could be no demonstration, scarcely even a sign of understanding or affection. Yet there was the attitude of perfect confidence. And when their

eyes met, they spoke a language which both understood.

"This scene must have grown very familiar to you in the last two and a half months," he said.

"Yes," she replied. "For that reason one is apt to pass over many of the features of it without noting them. I want to impress on my memory every detail."

"Isn't it strange," he said in a very low tone, "that this little port in a strange land, should so quickly have become a sacred spot to us?"

"The most sacred spot in all the world," she replied softly.

Some one called to them, and they both turned at once, and stood side by side facing the company.

"What a magnificent-looking pair they make!" exclaimed Mrs. Thomson, in a sudden enthusiasm forgetting that the voice would carry to the ears of all present.

"Was that what you called us to hear?" Miss MacAllister flashed back. "It certainly was worth while. Do you not think so, Dr. Sinclair?" She laughed gaily, a little defiantly, for she had seen the expression on her mother's face.

"I certainly do. And I'm proud to shine with the reflected light of beauty," he replied.

"Oh, you! You are worse than they are."

She turned hastily to the rail again, to hide her blushes. Her mother set her lips very tightly together, lifted her head very high, and sniffed. She was more intent than ever on forcing her daughter to marry Carteret. Whatever doubts of his suitability to be a good husband she may have entertained, had vanished with his actual successsion to the title. A peerage can cover a multitude of sins.

"All aboard!" rang out in English and Chinese. Men sprang to the hawsers to cast off. At that instant a sedan chair, with sweating bearers on the run, reached the dock and was dropped at the end of the gang plank. An unusually pretty Chinese girl of seventeen or eighteen years, richly dressed, and bearing in her arms a child of a few months old, stepped hastily out of it, and ran for the gangway as fast as her bound feet would carry her. One look at the child was enough to learn its story. Almost as dark as a Chinese in complexion, the features were distinctly European. It was a Eurasian, the child of a European father and an Asiatic mother.

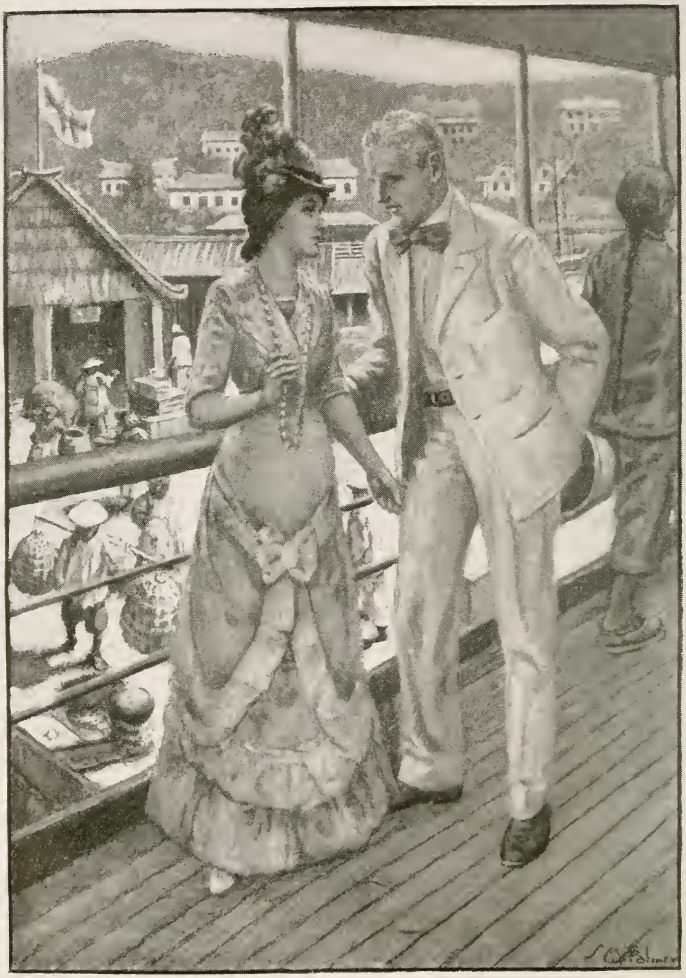
At the sight of the sedan chair Carteret had turned abruptly from the group on deck, and had run down the ladder. The next instant his voice was heard by those who leaned on the rail, speaking, not loudly, but in tones of restrained fury.

"Put that woman off. Don't let her on board this boat," uttered to the accompaniment of savage oaths.

"Stand back, Mr. Carteret. It is not for you to say who will be a passenger on this boat. This woman has money to pay her passage, and she has the same rights as you have. Make way there."

It was McLeod's voice, clear and cold and hard as steel.

Sinclair and Miss MacAllister did not look at each other for some moments. The others on the deck heard only very imperfectly what was said below. Some of the men talked continuously and loudly, so that the women might not hear. When Miss MacAllister's eyes did meet Sinclair's, they had in them such a look of confidence and content that the memory of it never faded from his mind.



" I'll be thinking of you, Donald, and you'll be thinking of me "

There was no opportunity for them to speak such farewells as their hearts craved. Once she had the chance to whisper,

"I'll be thinking of you, Donald, and you'll be thinking of me."

His answer was,

"And I'll come to you, Jessie, though all the world try to keep us apart."

As the general farewells were said, Constance Beauchamp shook hands with Sinclair gravely, sedately; stood for an instant irresolute, and then with a movement as light as that of a fawn, sprang into his arms, clasped hers around his neck and kissed him again and again, before them all. She had another parting boon to bestow.

"I am going away where I can't see you, Dr. Sinclair. You may get your hair cut whenever you wish. But keep one of the curls for me."

And Miss MacAllister looking on, felt no jealous pang.

Amidst waving hats and handkerchiefs, the *Hailoong* swung out into the stream, and started on her voyage, with her strangely assorted freight of humanity, going to their various destinies. Among those surely none were more tragic than the destinies of a man, of a woman, and of their child. He was bound for an English earldom, and a seat in the House of Lords. She was to drift into a native brothel, frequented by the degraded of all nationalities, in the great cosmopolitan port of Hong-Kong. Their child was to grow up in the streets of that tropical city, a nameless, mongrel waif, never to know his father's face, till he should stand as his accuser before the judgment seat of God.

XXXIII

MY CHILDREN IN THE LORD

"DR. MACKAY, you are not well."

"I know that, Dr. Sinclair."

"You have a temperature, I'm sure. Have you taken it?"

"No."

"How's that? I thought that you were careful to watch your health. You told me that you could not afford to be sick."

"So I am, as a rule. But I could not take it this time till my wife left. She would not have gone if she had known."

"You should have gone yourself. The strain has been too much for you. Knowing the shape you are in, why didn't you take a trip to Hong-Kong, or at least to Amoy, and rest a while?"

"That would be to play the part of a hireling shepherd. 'He that is an hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth, and the wolf catcheth them and scattereth the sheep. The hireling fleeth because he is an hireling and careth not for the sheep.'"

Sinclair was silent while he counted the pulse, and awaited the report of the thermometer. When he looked at it, his face was grave.

"What is it?" asked MacKay. "You need not hesitate to tell me. Is it high?"

"Too high for a man to have and be walking about. One hundred and three and four-fifths."

"If it were malaria, I should not mind. I have worked for days on the East Coast with an average of one hundred and three. But this is not malaria. I cannot be deceived in it. I know malaria too well."

"Where is the trouble?"

"In my head."

"So I thought. We must get you to bed. I'll send a chit to Bergmann. He is your doctor."

That was the beginning of the fight for life. MacKay was battling with all the determination of his nature against cerebral meningitis. The battle was not very long, but it was exceedingly sharp. By his bedside all the time sat one or other of the three doctors. This stern, reserved, intensely concentrated man had won their respect and admiration, and no effort was spared to save his life. Native students, trained in the elements of nursing, glided noiselessly in and out of the room. Over at the college, where the native preachers, elders, and students assembled, a continuous prayer-meeting was in progress, these yellow and brown-skinned men who "ain't got no souls," praying with the simple faith of little children that their beloved pastor might be restored to health.

On the white bed in the middle of the room, beneath its drapery of mosquito curtains, MacKay's burning head turned ceaselessly from side to side, day and night, day and night without sleep. And day and night, day and night he talked, talked, talked, sometimes in English, sometimes in Chinese, talked without pause or cessation about his converts, the church which he had brought into being.

"My people! . . . My people! . . . My children

in the Lord! . . . Who will take care of them? My sheep! . . . My poor sheep! . . . Left without a shepherd! . . . Who will feed them! . . . My little lambs! My little lambs! . . . Who will protect them from the wolves? . . . O God! I commend them to Thee! . . . My children! My children in the Lord!"

One day the raving suddenly ceased. Sinclair, startled by the unwonted silence, stepped to his bedside and threw back the curtains. MacKay was sitting bolt upright in bed. The fire of the fever was still in his face and eye. But his voice was perfectly natural, his manner calm and collected.

"Dr. Sinclair, what shall I do for my people? If I die, there is no one to take care of them. Mr. Thomson is not able now—perhaps never will be able. No person could come from Canada for a year, and when one would come, he would need another year or two for the language. Some of the native preachers are able, but none of them have authority to take the lead of their fellows. What shall I do?"

"Do not worry about that now," replied Sinclair soothingly. "There is the Good Shepherd still to lead His sheep. Leave it to Him. It is for you now to recover your strength."

"I am resolved what to do," MacKay went on, as if without noticing Sinclair's reply. "I shall ordain A Hoa and Tan He,* the two ablest of the preachers. That will give them authority to lead their brethren. That will make them pastors, shepherds of the sheep. It's irregular, I know. A presbytery should ordain. I'm not a presbytery. It's unusual. But unusual circumstances demand unusual methods. If I live, the

* Pronounced, Hay.

church lawyers at home will crucify me for it. If I die, they'll condone my action, praise me in public, and scarify me in private. But neither their praise nor their blame can touch me then."

"The church lawyers be hanged, hanged in their own red tape!" exclaimed Sinclair savagely. "They have never seen anything but their own little parishes, and they think their tuppenny parochial rules can be applied to the whole world."

"I know, Dr. Sinclair, I know. What saith the Scripture? 'Where there is no vision the people perish.' But I am resolved that my people shall not perish. . . . Leng-a," he said in Chinese to the student nurse, "call A Hoa and Tan He to come here. Call all the other preachers, the students and elders to come at once."

In a few minutes the room was full of native Christians, while others stood in the hall on one side, or out on the verandah on the other. Briefly and impressively MacKay explained to them the need and his resolve, charged the two preachers to accept the holy office, asked them the prescribed questions, and then, when they had knelt beside his bed, he laid a hand upon the head of each and reverently, solemnly said in Chinese,

"In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, the only King and Head of the Church, and by the authority He has given me when He committed to me the care of these His people, I invite you to take part of this ministry with me, and commit to your care these my children in the Lord."

Tears glistened on the faces of the natives. Sobs broke from many of them. But the sick man continued resolutely, now in English,

"Dr. Sinclair, I have written to the Foreign Mission Committee of our Church, asking them to appoint you a medical missionary in North Formosa. That is your desire?"

"It is."

"If they grant my request—I do not say that they will—but if they do, do you promise to stay with these people as long as you may find it possible so to do, to heal their souls as well as their bodies, and to give these native brethren your counsel, according as the Lord gives you wisdom?"

"I do."

"I am content."

With the benediction the Chinese softly withdrew. The sick man fell back exhausted on the pillows, soon to be tossing and raving in delirium again. But over in the little college building the native Christians, led by their two new-made pastors, bowed themselves continuously in prayer for the life which was more than any other life to them.

Was it in answer to those prayers that ice was unexpectedly brought into that port in that tropic clime? Who knows? So many things are veiled from our eyes! But certain it is that when the ice was heaped about his fevered head, MacKay fell into a sweet, childlike sleep, from which he did not awake for thirty-six hours. And when he awoke he was saved.

A few days later, under compulsion from the three doctors, he sailed on board the *Fokien* to join his family in Hong-Kong and rest. The day afterwards the French admiral declared a blockade, and Formosa was sealed against the world.

XXXIV

THE SOLDIER OF THE LEGION

FOR the five months from October till March Dr. Sinclair and Sergeant Gorman were with the Chinese forces before Keelung. For those five months rain fell almost continuously. Clouds drifted in from the sea, trailed through the valleys, and crept up the mountain sides, discharging their burdens of water as they went. The earth was sodden under foot. Walls and roofs sweated moisture. Tents and clothing mildewed. Food moulded and rotted in the constant wet. Scarcely ever a gleam of sunshine broke through the leaden canopy of cloud to cleanse the reeking earth and atmosphere. For one period of forty-five days the rain never ceased for an hour.

All through the wretched winter French transports arrived bringing reinforcements, and left again carrying sick and wounded men. All through the winter a succession of petty conflicts took place, a series of harassing, ineffectual actions was fought. A French column would issue from Keelung, plunge through roads which were nought but channels of liquid mud, struggle up dripping heights, through the tall grasses and ferns and brush, exposed to the fire of concealed sharp-shooters, and drive the enemy from the top at the point of the bayonet, only to find that their labour and the price of blood paid was all in vain. In some cases the small forces they were able to spare could

not hold the heights against the rallying Chinese. In others immediately behind they discovered higher and more strongly fortified posts dominating those that they had captured.

All the while the French cemetery on the east side of the harbour, which they had named La Galissonnière, was growing more and more populous at an alarming rate. Typhoid fever, malarial fever, cholera were far more dangerous than the bullets and knives of the Chinese. In spite of the numbers of sick and wounded men sent home to France, by the time the winter had passed into summer seven hundred of the small force employed had been laid away in the rain-soaked, wave-beaten beach at Keelung.

Meanwhile still heavier losses were suffered by the Chinese. The superior discipline and arms of the French more than compensated for their inferiority in numbers, and enabled them to work havoc in the close-set ranks of the Chinese. The little hospital at Loan-Loan was always filled with wounded. Sometimes they overflowed into the neighbouring houses requisitioned by the military authorities for the purpose.

Among these wounded men Sinclair and Gorman worked almost day and night. When a battle was in progress, one or other went out with the ambulance corps, gave the wounded first aid on the field, and forwarded them to the hospital for fuller treatment there. Under leaden skies and the incessant downpour of rain, with insufficient medicines and equipment, and subsisting on poor native food, they worked on week after week, month after month.

Perhaps what was hardest to bear was the fact that during all those months not a word reached them

from the outside world. The blockade had effectually excluded all mails. Gorman heard nothing from his family in Amoy. Sinclair had never a line from Hong-Kong.

"Bedad," said Gorman one day, "this is a time when a man would be glad to be afther seein' the shape of a letter, even if it were only from his mother-in-law."

"Let me have a look at your tongue, and a feel of your pulse, Gorman!" exclaimed Sinclair, reaching for the sergeant's wrist. "I knew that you were in a bad way. But I had no idea that you were so far gone as that."

"Och, docther, but wudn't I show you the iligances of an Irish jig, if the ould lady wud only write to me that she was dead an' p'acefully departed. Then I cud go home to me wife an' childer."

It was a time when men were tested. Daily, hourly, Sinclair thought of the girl he loved, spending the winter in Hong-Kong, subject to the attentions and solicitations of the now titled Carteret, and the pressure brought to bear by her mother. His hands would clench and his jaws set hard. But he was sure that Jessie MacAllister would do her part. Over and over again her farewell words kept running through his mind, "I'll be thinking of you, Donald, and you'll be thinking of me."

The longest and dreariest months will always come to an end. When February had passed, the skies began to clear sometimes. The first week of March had some beautiful days.

With this came renewed activity on the part of the French. In a series of actions lasting five days, March 3d to 7th, they succeeded in capturing some of the

strongest Chinese positions on the mountain-tops near Loan-Loan.

Sinclair had chosen for his field hospital and ambulance station a situation at the back of the post most strongly fortified by the Chinese. It was a mountain with a steep, almost perpendicular ascent, covered with grass and ferns and bamboos, on the side of the French attack. In this cover the Chinese irregulars were hidden. The crest of the hill was crowned by an interwoven fence of sharpened bamboos, a veritable chevaux-de-frise. Three other lines of entrenchments extended along the face of the hill, and had to be crossed by the assailants before the main position of the Chinese could be reached.

Behind the bamboo stockade, on the slope which led down towards the valley in which the river and the town lay, was a strong force of regular troops. Their right was commanded by the American, Silas Z. Leatherbottom; their left by a young Chinese officer, trained abroad. Gorman was with the right; Sinclair with the left.

It was the last day of the five. On an opposing hill which they had captured two days before, the French camp was plainly to be seen. Early in the morning the movement of troops began. A column moved off the open plateau and disappeared in the fog which hung in the valley, as if to attack the Chinese right. Before long heavy firing was heard in that direction, and Chinese troops were moved across from the left to strengthen the right under the American.

Unexpectedly rifle firing broke out under the curtain of mist in the valley directly in front. The French mountain guns on the opposite hill began to search the Chinese left. In an interval of the firing the order

"*Baïonnettes au canon! En avant!*" floated up to where Sinclair stood with some Chinese officers on the crest. The loud "Hourras!" of the French soldiers mingled with the shrill yells of the Chinese, and the crackling of rifles. The French were charging the first line of entrenchments with the bayonet.

It was taken, and they pressed their retreating foes on to the second. It too was captured, and in the same way the third. All the while their progress could be judged only by the sounds which came up through the canopy of fog.

Now the helmets of the Europeans began to appear through the veil of mist. They were at the foot of the last steep ascent, with its bamboo palisade at the top. The Chinese defenders poured on them a perfect hail of bullets. The ascent was so steep, the storm of lead so terrible, that even those seasoned troops shrank from it. The foremost, a company of the Bataillon d'Afrique, swung off to the left in search of an easier ascent and less deadly fire. Another company of the same regiment dashed straight at the steep hill-side. But the deadly fire of the Chinese mowed the foremost of them down. A company in a different uniform, which had been held in reserve, two hundred strong, was ordered to their support. On they came with a rush, cheering each other in a perfect babel of tongues. The "*En avant*" of their officers was echoed in almost every language of Europe. It was a company of the famous *Légion Étrangère,* the Foreign Legion.

Their polyglot cries mingled with the French of the Bataillon d'Afrique, as in regimental rivalry they struggled up that terrible ascent. Bamboo scaling ladders were placed, only to be thrown down. Men climbed them, only to be crushed by the rocks which

the Chinese hurled upon them in savage hand-to-hand warfare. But the assailants did not draw back. French, Austrians, Germans, Italians, Corsicans, Poles, men of Alsace-Lorraine, exiles from every land of Europe, they struggled desperately up. They fought their way to the palisade, hewed gaps in it, and formed on top.

The Chinese irregulars, driven in on their regular troops, threw the latter into confusion. In spite of the gallant efforts of their young commander, most of them broke and fled. Not so their leader. Rallying a hundred or so of his broken army, he led them in a bayonet charge against their foes. A volley decimated their ranks. When the smoke cleared away, the young officer was seen leading those who remained to the attack. Another volley rang out, leaving him only a handful of men. But once more the gallant Chinese gathered the little group around him, and dashed at the invaders. When the smoke of a third volley cleared away there were none left to charge. The brave young pioneer of the new China which is to be, had died on the field he was determined to hold.

The American general, Leatherbottom, realized when it was too late that the French had deceived him by a false attack on the right, while their real objective was the weakened left, commanded by the young Chinese. He explained to Sinclair afterwards,

"Thet's whar these 'ar Europeans get the start on me. When it comes t' fightin', I kin fight. Don't yew make enny mistake about thet. But when it's a question of military evolyewtions an' tictacs, thet's whar they've got me beat by a mile."

And certain it was that when the Chinese left position was captured, and the right was forced to retreat,

the French were kept from coming to close quarters by the deadly shooting of one rifle in the Chinese rear-guard. And that rifle was in the hands of the general of the retreating force, the long, slab-sided Vermonter, Silas Z. Leatherbottom.

Meanwhile Dr. Sinclair, realizing that the day was lost to the Chinese, was forwarding the wounded with all possible speed, down into the valley towards a place of safety. As the Chinese left was broken, he had come down with a long line of stretchers, bearing wounded who had been picked up under fire.

As he descended to the level of the ravine which encircled the mountain, he saw within a hundred yards of him a squad of the Foreign Legion, hurrying along the ravine, either seeking an easier ascent to the field of battle, or making an attempt to cut off the Chinese retreat.

Suddenly out of a dense grove of bamboos on the hill-side spirted streams of flame and smoke. The stout, fair-complexioned sub-lieutenant who was leading them, threw up his arms, staggered, caught the trunk of a tree-fern which saved him from falling.

"*Mein Gott im Himmel!*" he screamed. "*Je suis tué! En avant, mes camarades! Vorwärts!*"

They were his last words. But they were typical of the character of the Legion.

A sergeant of almost gigantic size sprang forward.

"*Vers la gauche!*" he shouted. "*Chargez à la baïonnette! En avant!*"

"Good for you, sergeant!" yelled an exile of Ireland fighting under a foreign flag. "Give the yellow divils a taste of the steel. Hurroosh!"

They dashed at the bamboos. But the withering fire cut them down. Not a man reached the ambus-

cade but the big sergeant. A bullet hit him. He fell; rose to his feet, and made a couple of paces forward. Another hit him on the leg. He raised himself on a foot and a knee. A heavy stone thrown at a few yards struck him on the head. He went down silent and motionless.

With wild screams the Chinese irregulars burst from their cover, brandishing long knives and racing with each other to be first to reach their victims. It was not merely their lust for blood which clamoured to be satisfied. Still more was it their lust for gain. There was a price set upon French heads.

Anticipating the result, and knowing what would follow, Sinclair dashed down the steep, grass-covered side of the ravine at the top of his speed.

"Wait a little!" he yelled in his imperfect Chinese. "Stop that!"

But the irregulars were Hakka tribesmen from the savage border, speaking a different language from that he was learning. They probably did not understand him. If they did, they were not to be baulked of their rewards by the orders of the foreign doctor.

Already the bloody knives were at work. Several were quarrelling over the body of the lieutenant, for there was a higher price for the head of an officer. Two or three had thrown themselves upon the sergeant. This was the nearest body to Sinclair. One of the knives was lifted. At a dozen paces Sinclair's big revolver spoke. The Chinese flung backwards down the slope, throwing his glittering knife high in the air.

That was a language they all could understand. For a moment they seemed disposed to resist. But the big foreign doctor was already among them, his

revolver barking with the rapidity of a machine gun, and at every spirt of flame a man went down. Behind him came a number of well-armed regulars, who had been detailed to convoy the ambulances. The irregulars broke and fled. But they carried away with them the head of every man of that little squad save the sergeant.

The broken leg with its great gaping wound was hastily bandaged and supported by splints. The torn shoulder and the cut head had the blood staunched. Then the unconscious man was placed on a stretcher and borne to camp to be cared for in the same hospital as the Chinese wounded.

As the line of stretchers moved down the ravine, the tri-colour could be seen floating over the crest of the mountain where the battle had been fought, and the French bugles could be heard sounding "*au drapeau.*"

XXXV

THE LANGUAGE OF PARADISE

THE war was practically over. The Chinese could not dislodge the French from Keelung. The French could not advance any farther into the country.

What had they gained for all their expenditure of blood and effort? They had not been able to make themselves masters of a single foot of ground at Tamsui. At Keelung they held the ruined town and the harbour, and some outposts two miles from where their warships lay. Beyond the range of their naval guns they could not go. For such barren results, all of which in three months' time they were to relinquish again, they had sacrificed fully one thousand lives of French soldiers and sailors, had disabled hundreds more through wounds and disease, and had killed an unknown number of Chinese, none of whom knew what the war was about.

It dragged on for another month and a half before the blockade was raised and hostilities ceased. Six weeks elapsed after that before Keelung was evacuated, and the French squadron and transports sailed away, leaving their silent city of the dead, their tale of killed and wounded and missing.

Through the month of March and half of April, Sinclair laboured on among the wounded of the Chinese army. He was their Life-Healer. By one of the

strange ironies of life two of those Hakka tribesmen who had gone down before his revolver on the seventh of March, were brought to him for treatment, and he healed them. They looked with wonder, not unmixed with fear, at the big fair-haired foreigner, who had been so ferocious a day or two before. Now his touch was as gentle as it before had been terrible, and in his very word was healing. They did not understand. It was a part of the foreign devil's madness. It was a part of his magic.

But there was one over whom Sinclair spent more time than over any other. It was the big sergeant of the Foreign Legion. He was desperately wounded, and for a long time lay silently unconscious. From that stage he passed into one of delirium. Then he raved, sometimes in French, sometimes in German, sometimes in English, sometimes in a jumble of languages like the Babel of tongues in the famous corps to which he belonged. But there was one language which he used more than all the others, and when he used it, his voice was soft and his accents tender, like those of a child talking to his mother, or of a lover to his beloved. That language Sinclair did not understand.

Day after day, night after night, he sat by the wounded man's bed in the tent where he and Gorman had their quarters. Every moment he could get off duty among the Chinese he was at his post. There was something about this French sergeant which attracted him strangely. He was big and dark, with jet black hair and large, dark eyes. When he was wounded his face, save where it was covered by thick, black, stubbly whiskers, was tanned to a dark brown. But as the days and weeks of illness passed by, the

sunburn faded from his face, and left his skin clear, almost to transparency. Then Gorman shaved him, "to make the poor craythur a little more comfortable loike." The fineness of the features at once struck Sinclair. Was it only fancy, or was it a fact that he had somewhere seen some one who resembled this man? He racked his brain to recall who it was, or where he had seen that expression and form of face.

"I can't think. But I know that I have seen that face or its counterpart somewhere."

The big dark eyes of the patient opened, and began to wander over every object in the tent. Then the wounded man began to talk. It was in the language Sinclair did not understand.

"I wonder would Gorman know anything of that," he said to himself. "He has a little bit of each of a score of tongues."

A native boy ran for the sergeant. He came quickly. The wounded soldier was silent when he entered, and Sinclair was afraid that he would not speak again. Presently his eyes began to rove around. Then he spoke in a low, soft voice, words of the unknown tongue. For a few moments Gorman stood silent with a puzzled look on his face, as if unable to get the sense of what was being said. Then with a sudden start he lifted his hands above his head.

"Be all the saints in glory, docther, do you not know that? It's what you'll have to speak whin you get to hiven. It's Gaelic. Not Irish, but Scotch! The man's a Highlander. . . . He's jist a bit of a gossoon ag'in, wid his mother croonin' over him and puttin' him to sleep, an' him not wantin' to go. Och, the poor bhoy! The poor bhoy! An' the divils had nearly cut off his head!"

Sinclair sprang to his feet, his face as pale as death, his whole frame trembling with excitement.

"Gorman," he said, with the slow emphasis of absolute conviction, "it's Miss MacAllister's brother."

"Be the love of God, docther, I believe that you are right."

"I know that I'm right, Gorman. It's Allister MacAllister. I was trying to place his resemblance to some one I knew. Now I know what that resemblance is. It is neither to Miss MacAllister nor her mother. It is something between the two. He has his mother's colour of hair and eyes, and form of face, with his sister's expression."

"Right you are, docther. An', docther, he mustn't die."

"He must live, if human power can save him, and God's mercy will spare him," was the solemn reply.

Half-an-hour later a speedy runner left for Tamsui, bearing a letter to Drs. Bergmann and Black, with an account of the case of the wounded Frenchman, a request for needed medicines, and the hope that one of them might be able to come over to the camp before Keelung for a consultation.

They both came. They held a consultation, spoke many kind words of what Sinclair had accomplished, and returned to Tamsui to tell of the most wonderful work they had ever seen accomplished by one doctor against such obstacles.

The day after they left, Sinclair sat by his patient in the tent by the river side. The spring sun was shining gloriously, drawing up the moisture from the saturated earth. The rippling of the river, the scent of the flowers, the song of the birds floated into the tent where the sick man lay. Sinclair had been looking

out on the flowing water. Something drew his gaze towards the patient's cot. The large dark eyes were fixed on him, no longer wandering and restless, but intelligent, full of questioning and wonder.

"Where am I?" he asked in French.

"With friends," was the reply in the same language.

"How did I get here?"

"You were wounded, sergeant."

The last word seemed to help his memory.

"I remember. We had taken the fort on the Table, and were trying to capture Fort Bamboo, on the South Mountain."

"Yes, that's it."

"Did we capture it?"

"Yes."

"But some of us ran into an ambuscade in the bamboos."

"Yes, and you were wounded. I've been trying to fix you up again."

"Are you a doctor?"

"Yes."

"You are not one of the doctors of the Legion. I do not remember you. Do you belong to the Zéphyrs or l'Infanterie de Marine?"

"To neither. I am a volunteer doctor. But you have talked enough. I do not want you to tire yourself. I want you to get better. You must go to sleep."

That afternoon General Liu Ming-chuan visited the hospital to personally announce that an armistice was likely to be arranged, to thank Dr. Sinclair for his invaluable services, and to tell him that both he and Sergeant Gorman were recommended for various buttons and rings of jade, daggers, and feathers of honour.

"Now," he concluded, "is there any request with which the honourable physician will deign to honour me, that I may have the pleasure of granting it?"

"There is, Your Excellency," replied Sinclair.

"Will the honourable physician name it?"

"That Your Excellency will graciously condescend to grant that the wounded French prisoner be handed over to me, that I may restore him to his aged father, of whom he is the only son."

"The honourable physician's request is granted; and may the young man comfort the heart of his father, and do honour to his ancestors."

A week later Sinclair and Gorman left the Chinese camp for Tamsui, carrying with them in a specially constructed litter the man whom they were convinced was the long-lost son and brother.

Of their suspicions concerning him, the wounded man knew nothing. He indeed knew where he was and how he came to be there. He knew that he had been a prisoner in the Chinese camp. He knew that he had been cared for and his life saved by a Canadian missionary doctor and an Irish sergeant. He knew that instead of leaving him in the hands of the Chinese, they were taking him to the foreign settlement at Tamsui, until he should be strong enough to rejoin his regiment. But for any hint they gave or aught he suspected, he was nothing to them but Sergeant Alfred Melnotte, of the 3d Company, 4th Battalion of the Foreign Legion, reported by his company commander as "*disparu,*" missing.

When he reached Tamsui and was installed in a large, airy room in Dr. MacKay's house, where the soft April winds blew in, where he lay and luxuriated

in a great white bed, with its canopy of mosquito curtains, such luxury as he had not known for years, he wondered at the kindness of these strangers. But to them as to all the other residents of Tamsui, he was just "the French sergeant, Sergeant Melnotte."

XXXVI

AN APPARITION

IN Hong-Kong the winter had passed in such a round of gaieties as the colony could afford. There were balls and dinner parties, state and private, afloat and ashore. There were cricket matches and military reviews in the city. There were races and golf, and more cricket matches and picnics at Happy Valley. A company of players of more or less excellence, going from Australia to England or America, from time to time came by way of Hong-Kong, and perhaps for a week drew astonishingly large houses, considering the smallness of the European population. There were excursions to Macao, and trips to Canton.

Mrs. MacAllister entered with the utmost zest into the social life of the great southern city. Although never at ease in society, always revealing to the practised eye that she had not been accustomed to it in her youth, the continual attendance at all manner of functions, the association with people supposed to be of social standing, had become her ideal of happiness. In the sumptuous apartments her husband had taken in the hotel, she entertained lavishly. Her wealth covered all defects of education and training. Perhaps the majority of those she met in the social life of the colony were not so much better bred than herself. And those who were, accepted her bountiful

hospitality, and did not laugh at her till her back was turned.

Then she had far more compensating circumstances than most who have to depend on their wealth for admission into society. Her husband was keenly intelligent, well-informed, and perfectly at home anywhere. Her daughter was strikingly beautiful and accomplished. The accepted suitor for that daughter's hand was an earl. How could any colony be expected to resist such a combination as that? Hong-Kong simply surrendered at discretion.

It is true that Mr. MacAllister grew very weary of the inanities of the social round. He was becoming more and more anxious about his ill-success in getting any trace of his son. It is true also that many noted the fact that Miss MacAllister seemed to be very indifferent towards her titled suitor. But, as she once in confidence explained to McLeod, his acceptance by her mother saved her from being bored by any other of the aspiring young men she met.

Carteret had been in Hong-Kong on several occasions before and had been almost entirely ignored by colonial society. But society is not to be blamed for that. A younger son, on a small remittance, is a very different proposition, even if the heir has only one lung, from a real live earl, with the full income of his estates at his disposal. Society has a keen appreciation of the fitness of things. It regards not what a man is, but what he has.

Thus the winter passed away. But it was not without other incident. One day in January two young men were talking in the rotunda of the hotel. They were both officers of an English regiment then forming part of the garrison. One had just returned from

leave, having arrived by the P. and O. liner the day before. The other had been in the city with his regiment.

"By Jove, Powell," said the former, "I got the biggest fright of my life yesterday."

"How's that?" said the other. "Didn't know that you ever got frightened."

"Well, I'll acknowledge that I'm not strong on getting scared, unless there's a woman in the case. Then I run every time."

"Perhaps! But that has not enlightened me as to what gave you the fright yesterday."

"It was this way. When we came to anchor we found ourselves right alongside of the French transport *Canton,* with troops for Formosa. She had a battalion of the Légion Étrangère. I had heard of them at Singapore, and knew that there was an old schoolmate of mine on board—Du Marais, captain commanding the first company. We chummed together when I was studying French and drill at Saint Cyr. So before coming ashore I went aboard the *Canton* to look him up. Du Marais was there all right, brown, black rather, but fit as a fiddle after campaigns in Algiers. But it wasn't Du Marais who gave me the scare."

"What was it?"

"You remember MacAllister of the —th Dragoon Guards?"

"Who shot Standish after Tel-el-Kebir?"

"Yes."

"Of course I do. His father and mother and sister are in Hong-Kong now."

"Well, I could swear that he was on board the *Canton* in Hong-Kong Harbour yesterday."

"But he was reported killed by Arabs on his way to Alexandria."

"I know. And that is what gave me the fright. As I was talking to Du Marais a big sergeant passed and, by the Lord, if Allister MacAllister is living that sergeant was he! If he's dead that was his ghost. Du Marais noticed me start and asked what was the matter. I told him. He said that the sergeant was not of his company and he did not know him, but that he would inquire. He came back in a little and said: 'You must be mistaken. That was Sergeant Melnotte of Lebigot's company. He is a Frenchman from Besançon.' But I was convinced that it was MacAllister or his ghost."

The two young officers strolled away. They did not notice a man sitting under a spreading tropical plant and hidden still more by the home newspaper he was reading. If they had noticed, they would have seen that the newspaper trembled like an aspen leaf in the palsied hands which held it. When they were gone, Mr. MacAllister rose from behind the plant. His face was pale as ashes, but his movements were quick and decided. He hurried to the harbour-master's office to ask about the *Canton.* She had sailed for Formosa the evening before.

He returned to the hotel to write letters to Consul Beauchamp, to Commander Gardenier, to Dr. Sinclair. Under the stringent rules of the blockade, those letters did not reach their destinations till their usefulness was past. He set himself to devise means to effect his own return to Formosa. It was not until April that it could be accomplished. Meanwhile he told neither his wife nor his daughter, lest their hopes

should be disappointed, and the disappointment should be more than they could bear.

On the fourth of April the protocol was signed by the representatives of France and China. As soon as the news reached Hong-Kong the *Hailoong* sailed for Tamsui. She had on board two white passengers for that port, Dr. MacKay and Mr. MacAllister.

The forces of nature and of man seemed determined to prevent her reaching there. When near her destination a terrific storm forced her to run back to the coast of China for shelter, as she had been compelled to do the previous August. When she again appeared off Tamsui a shot across her bows brought her to. The French commander had not heard that the blockade had been raised. Once more she had to put about and steam for the Pescadores to get authority from Admiral Courbet himself. From the Pescadores to Amoy, and again to Tamsui, she carried her impatient passengers before they were allowed to land.

XXXVII

"MY SON! MY SON!"

THE day the *Hailoong* first appeared off the harbour of Tamsui was one of deep anxiety to Sinclair. While the other foreign residents were almost delirious with joy at the prospect of the removal of the blockade, he was disturbed and anxious. He did not know who might be on board that boat. He had a presentiment so fixed that he could not shake himself free from it, that Mr. MacAllister was coming back again.

He dreaded the effect on his patient of the meeting between father and son. The wounded man was still weak. The doctor had not even hinted to him that he was known. Indeed, he had no absolute proof that this was Allister MacAllister. Yet he was convinced that this was he. He felt that he ought to tell him that he was known, and that his father was coming. Deep as was his own disappointment at the still further delay of word from Hong-Kong, it was nevertheless with a feeling akin to relief that he saw the *Hailoong* forced to steam away without entering port. He resolved that his patient must be prepared for her return.

The two young men had grown deeply attached to each other. It was not strange. Sinclair had good reason to like the man he believed to be Jessie MacAllister's brother. Sergeant Melnotte had good reason to be grateful to the man who had saved his life.

But there was a deeper reason. It was the instinctive attraction of mutually complementary characters. Sinclair's invincible good-humour and cheerfulness were as life-giving sunshine to the wounded soldier, worn by hardship and suffering. Melnotte's patient, uncomplaining endurance of intense pain, his quiet but profound gratitude, appealed to Sinclair's admiration for all that was heroic and manly. The large, dark eyes followed his every movement with a look of devotion and thankfulness which was pathetic. It was the expression of dependence of one who had been strong, but was now brought down to the weakness of a child. In this gratitude Sinclair found his opportunity.

"Sergeant Melnotte," he said, "you are not French."

The invalid's face flushed a little, but he answered quietly:

"What makes you think so, doctor? Do I not speak French correctly?"

"Oh, yes! So far as I can see, you speak it perfectly; much better than I do. But you are not French."

"How do you come to that conclusion?"

"When you were delirious you spoke Gaelic."

"Did I?" he asked quietly, as if holding himself in hand.

"Yes."

"Did you understand what I said?"

"No; but Sergeant Gorman did."

The man on the bed did not reply. His face assumed a strained, hunted look. Sinclair sat on the edge of the bed and laid his hand gently on his patient's.

"Sergeant Melnotte," he said in a low, kind tone, "you need be afraid of nothing from me. Are you not Allister MacAllister?"

The wounded man's hand gripped Sinclair's. A spasm of pain crossed his face. He closed his eyes and lay for a few moments very still. Then, without opening his eyes, he said in English:

"What do you know about Allister MacAllister?"

"I know his father, his mother, and his sister. I know that they are searching the world for him. I know that he disappeared and left no trace behind him, because he thought he had killed a man." The great, dark eyes were open now and looking in unbelieving wonder into Sinclair's frank, kindly blue ones. "But he didn't kill him."

"Dr. Sinclair, do you mean to say that Captain Philip Standish did not die?"

"Yes, that is what I mean. He is alive and well, and has been helping your father to search for you."

"Thank God! Oh, thank God!"

He covered his face with his hands. His lips moved as if in prayer. Sinclair did not stir, nor utter a word to disturb his thoughts and thankfulness. At length he uncovered his face and looked up.

"Dr. Sinclair," he said in a voice scarcely above a whisper, "where did you meet my people?"

"Here in Tamsui. . . . No," he continued, in answer to the eager, startled look, "they are not here now. But they are not far away. They are in Hong-Kong."

. . . . . .

Four days later the *Hailoong* was again seen standing in towards the harbour. After a very brief delay the French allowed her to proceed.

The whole foreign population except Sergeant Gorman and the patient, whom he remained to care for, were down at the dock. The native Christians were there in a body in the hopes that Dr. MacKay might be on board.

As the first boat with the first news from abroad for exactly six months zigzagged through the field of mines and obstructions with which the mouth of the harbour was blocked, every glass was focussed upon her.

"It's McLeod who is bringing her in," said Boville, who was using the long customs telescope. "Whiteley is not on the bridge. He is on deck with two passengers."

"That's MacKay next to him," said the consul. "I can tell him by his size and the long black whiskers against his white clothes."

"Who's the big man on MacKay's left?" asked Sinclair, who wanted some one to confirm his own impressions.

"It looks like MacAllister," replied Boville. "Yes, it is MacAllister. I can see him plainly now that she has swung to starboard. I wonder what is bringing him back to Formosa."

"Lord, what shall I do to entertain him? . . . I haven't a thing to eat fit to offer a white man. . . . 'Pon my soul, I haven't!" spluttered De Vaux.

Sinclair and the consul glanced at each other understandingly, and the latter said:

"Make your mind easy about that, De Vaux. With your permission I shall be glad to entertain Mr. MacAllister. I have a little foreign chow left. My wife will probably have sent some more by this boat."

With tears of joy, shrill cries of welcome, and ex-

clamations of thankfulness the natives received their pastor.

No less gladly, but hiding their feelings under jest and laughter, the Britons welcomed their countrymen. In the midst of the handshaking Beauchamp said:

"Mr. MacAllister, you will be my guest this time. Come away up to the consulate."

With a brief word or two in an undertone to Sinclair, the consul led his guest away. After a cheery laugh and an exchange of banter with McLeod, the doctor climbed the steep hill with MacKay and his converts to the former's house.

Twenty minutes later he looked from the verandah and saw the consul and Mr. MacAllister coming. The latter's face was pale as death. He was stooping forward and trembling as if with palsy. But he was covering the ground with such strides that the consul, in spite of his agility, was almost running to keep pace with him. As he drew near the verandah the father broke into a run, and his trembling hands caught Sinclair's:

"May I see him, doctor? May I see him?"

"Yes. He's expecting you."

"God bless you, Dr. Sinclair! God bless you!"

As the door of the room swung open the man on the bed raised himself on his elbow and uttered one word in Gaelic:

"Athair!" (Father).

"My son! My son, Allister! My son! My son!"

The father was on his knees beside the bed, holding the great worn frame of his boy in his arms. The son's arms were around the father's neck. They were kissing each other, were crooning to each other in the Gaelic. All the passion and the tenderness of the

Celtic nature was being poured forth, unrestrained. The love of this man of business and his soldier son was like the love of a man for a woman, and of a woman for a man.

Half an hour later Sinclair and MacKay gently opened the door. They were anxious about the strength of the wounded man. The father was still on his knees by the bed. The son's arms were still around his neck. The father's voice was being lifted up to God in prayer, still in the language of his native hills. It was not a prayer of petition, but of thankfulness. And the words they heard were these:

"'For this my son was dead, and is alive again. He was lost and is found.'"

XXXVIII

REJECTED

MacKAY and Sinclair were sitting in the former's study. It was the first moment they had found in which to discuss their own plans and prospects.

"Dr. Sinclair," said MacKay, "you remember my prophecy about the way the Church at home would treat me, because I ordained those two native preachers."

"Yes, I remember."

"Read that."

He handed Sinclair a letter. It was from an old official of the Church. In dry, formal words he recounted the misdemeanours and errors of which MacKay was guilty in that "you did arrogate unto yourself and usurp the functions of a Presbytery, and did, by the laying on of your hands, without the presence and without the authority of a Presbytery, ordain or pretend to ordain to the office of the holy ministry two native preachers: to wit, one A Hoa and one Tan He."

After having recounted the pains and penalties which the heinous offence might incur, the letter closed with the consolation that, in view of his past services and his zeal which had outrun his discretion, the General Assembly would be petitioned to condone his offence, and it might be pleased to grant the prayer of the petition, on condition that he would

promise that it would never happen again. This promise, it was trusted, would be forthcoming by return mail.

When he finished reading Sinclair sat in silence for some moments, looking straight at MacKay. Then he burst out:

"The old fossil! Has he no imagination? Has he no knowledge of conditions here? Has he no common sense to apply to an uncommon situation?"

"It looks like that," replied MacKay. "But perhaps it is not all his fault. He has never seen any Christian work except that in a congregation of decent Ontario farmers, or in a city church composed of the hereditary good. He has never been any place where cut-and-dried Presbyterian rules could not be applied as easily as a straight edge to a plane surface."

"A mere animated edition of Rules and Forms of Procedure."

"Yes."

"But did you not explain to him the exceptional situation, demanding exceptional treatment?"

"Yes. I explained it very fully."

"And could the old dry-as-dust not understand? Could he not understand that at the time you did this you were likely to die within twelve hours? Could he not understand that, if you had died and you had left no one to take the lead, all this work, this Church you have builded, was likely to go to smash before they could get another man capable of carrying it on? Could he not understand that?"

"No, he could not understand. And if he could, the total destruction of the native Church would be nothing as compared with the calamity of having

broken a rule framed for the Church in Canada, but not in China."

"A case of man's being made for the rules, and not the rules for man."

"Exactly."

"I suppose he can't help it. He has been reared in a groove. He lives in a groove. He will die in a groove. And if he gets to heaven it will be through a groove fenced in by rules and precedents."

"If you like to put it that way."

"But will you submit to it? Will you promise to be good and not to do this wicked thing any more?"

"Yes."

"I don't think I would."

"If I didn't, I'd be suspended and have to give up my work. I would submit to nearly anything rather than leave these people. They are my children in the Lord."

Sinclair made no reply. He was seeing more deeply than ever into the secret springs of the life of this stern prophet of North Formosa. He had not wondered at his bearing hardship, at his facing danger, at his seeming almost to court death. That was what was to be expected of one of his nature. But when he saw this fiery Celt meekly submit to the rebukes of small and ignorant men, in order that he might be permitted by their ill-grace to go on with his work, he began to fathom the depth of his love for the dark-skinned people of his island home.

Presently MacKay spoke:

"I have another letter which touches you more closely. It is the reply to my request that you should be appointed a medical missionary. Do you care to read it? Here it is."

Sinclair took it and read. It had evidently not been written until after the Church at home had received word of MacKay's recovery from his serious illness. It opened with some very conventional and perfunctory expressions of thanksgiving to the Almighty for having "spared the life of His devoted servant and restored him to such a large measure of health."

Then it proceeded to deal with the application for Sinclair's appointment as a missionary. It was "contrary to the usage of the Committee to appoint a man who had not put in his application in regular form. The Committee also preferred that the candidate for appointment should appear in person before it, that its members might be satisfied as to his fitness. Doubtless Dr. Sinclair was all that Dr. MacKay represented him to be. But the Committee felt that it would be unwise to rely on Dr. MacKay's judgment in the matter, especially in view of some recent regrettable occurrences. . . .

"The Committee was very particular that its missionaries should be men of deep spirituality, spending much time in prayer, characterized by meekness and humility, filled with love for the natives, ready to make sacrifices and endure hardships in order that the Kingdom of God might be established on the earth. The Committee regretted that it could not accept without reserve Dr. MacKay's judgment of the candidate's fitness, especially in view of recent events. . . . If Dr. Sinclair really desired appointment, he must return to Canada and appear in person before the Committee. . . ."

As he proceeded Sinclair's face was a study. When he had read a page or more of this epistle he stopped, glanced at MacKay, then turned to the last page, and looked at the signature:

"Your brother in the Lord,
"THADDÆUS CORNELIUS MCGUFFIN."

"Thaddæus Cornelius McGuffin," he repeated. "Who in the world is that? I thought that I knew most of the Church officials at home. But I never heard of him. Who is he?"

"A young clerk who has been appointed to help the convener of the Committee. A sort of office assistant."

"And does he dare to write to you like that?"

"You see for yourself."

"The gall of him! What does he know of the qualities needed in a missionary? Has he ever been in the foreign field?"

"Never been nearer to it than the suburbs of Toronto."

"He talks about sacrifice and enduring hardships. What has he sacrificed? What hardships has he borne?"

"To the best of my knowledge he has never sacrificed a meal of victuals or a night's rest. But these are the men who talk most glibly of self-sacrifice. As for hardships, I think the greatest he has ever known has been to ride down to the office in a Toronto street car."

"That's bad enough," laughed Sinclair, whose good-humour was returning as the absurdity of this office-hand's high and mighty attitude towards the

veteran missionary grew upon him. "But tell me, Dr. MacKay," he continued, "what would they do with me if I did go home and appear before the Committee?"

"They would ask you a number of harmless questions about your disposition and temper, and your submissiveness to authority, your religious experience, devotional practices, and habits of study—the whole lasting perhaps fifteen minutes."

"And do they imagine that they would learn more of me by that than you could testify of me after having seen me among the natives for the last nine months?"

"Evidently! Especially as my judgment is not to be trusted since some recent events."

"And for that fifteen-minute interview they would expect me to travel ten thousand miles?"

"Yes."

"Then I'm not going. I shall not submit myself to the inquisition of Thaddæus Cornelius McGuffin."

"I am very glad."

Sinclair looked at MacKay with surprise and question in his eyes.

"I am very glad that you will not go. You would not be appointed if you did."

"How do you know?"

"Read the rest of the letter."

"You tell me the substance of it. Life's too short to spend so much time reading McGuffin's effusions."

"Your sins have found you out." MacKay's face showed a gleam of grim humour as he spoke. "You are not spiritual. You were accustomed to spend only fifteen or twenty minutes in your morning devotions

instead of a full hour as required by McGuffin's standards. You are not meek. You once thrashed a rough who insulted a lady on the street instead of sweetly reasoning with him. Then you took him to the hospital to recover from the thrashing. You are not sound. It is whispered that you said that you didn't think Moses wrote the account of his own funeral in the Book of Deuteronomy."

As Sinclair listened to this epitome of McGuffin's catalogue of his shortcomings he went off into peals of laughter, in which MacKay joined. The inner nature of the quiet, reserved man had come out in the intimacies of a rare friendship.

"Do they think that I would corrupt the morals of the heathen?" Sinclair inquired as he recovered himself.

"Apparently. Perhaps you would batter your heresies into them with your fists."

"What would McGuffin have thought if he had seen me at Sin-tiam or where the Hakkas were trying to cut the head off poor young MacAllister?"

"He wouldn't have seen you. He would have swooned away."

"Well, I suppose it is all off with me so far as being a missionary under my own Church is concerned."

"I am afraid that it is. I had set my heart on it. We could have done so much together. You have won the hearts of the natives in a wonderful way. I could have left the medical work all to you. You would have done great good. But it is an unrealized dream. I am disappointed. But I am not discouraged. I am accustomed to disappointments. I meet them often. But discouraged? Never!"

Sinclair gripped MacKay's hand in his powerful grasp:

"I am glad to have known you, MacKay. It has done me good."

"And I, you. But we'll say no more of that. What are you going to do? Have you anything in view?"

"Nothing. But something will always turn up for a doctor. I'll find work somewhere, where the sins of my past are not known."

Just then there was a whoop outside. Then another and another. Then the sound of a heavy footfall in a war-dance on the verandah.

"That's Gorman!" exclaimed Sinclair. "What is the matter with him?"

He sprang to the door, followed by McKay. There was Gorman, executing the wildest kind of a dance, bringing his feet down with a vigour which threatened to split the tiles of the verandah, and all the time waving a letter over his head to the accompaniment of wild yells:

"Whoop! Docther! Hurroosh! Be the blissin' of the saints! Whoop! Me mother-in-law's gone to glory. Hurroosh!"

"Dead!" exclaimed Sinclair. "When did it happen?"

"Six weeks ago, be the blissin' of hiven! Whoop! Won't the angels be havin' a divil of a time wid her now! Hurroosh! That's always the way wid her. The first month she's p'aceful as a suckin' lamb wid its twinklin' tail. Thin she cuts loose, an' be the middle of the second she bates Banagher. She'll jist have hit her gait be now. Begorra but they'll jist be wonderin' what they've got! Whoop! An' now me wife an' childer for me, an' a quiet loife! Hurroosh!"

XXXIX

A REALIZED DREAM

"DR. SINCLAIR, I owe you an apology. I have a letter for you which I neglected to deliver. I was so selfish in my gladness yesterday that I forgot that I had this for you."

Sinclair rose from where he sat beside his patient on the broad verandah and received from Mr. MacAllister the letter. It was addressed in the same hand as a little note he had carried in an inner pocket until it was worn to fragments. In spite of his efforts at self-control, the hot blood rushed to his face. The keen grey eyes had a humorous twinkle.

"I shall keep Allister company for a while. When you are ready, I should like to have a few minutes' talk with you."

"Thank you, I'll be back shortly," was all Sinclair could say as he hurried to his room.

It had been a bitter disappointment to him the day before, when the *Hailoong's* mail was distributed, that there was not so much as a note from Hong-Kong for him. All through that long, lonesome winter he had centred his anticipations around that first mail. Now it had come. There were other letters for him. But there were none from Hong-Kong. It was not till then that he realized how much Jessie MacAllister had been in his thoughts and how blank life would be without her.

But, with the stoicism which lay hidden under the

easy good-humour of his surface temperament, he said nothing of his disappointment, even to McLeod, and went about his duties outwardly as cheerful as usual. He did not know how many letters in the same handwriting were lying at Swatow and Amoy and Foochow, awaiting an opportunity of transmission to the blockaded Formosan coast. He did not know of this letter, sent by her father's hand, that it might be safely delivered.

That letter was sufficient reward for all his waiting and disappointment. It was so tender, so trusting, so full of longing for his coming. Words which had refused to leave her tongue during those few brief hours of intercourse after their mutual confessions flowed easily from her pen. Again the wonder came to him that this girl who wrote to him with such confidence and laid bare her heart to him should be the same as she who had flouted him on the deck of the *Hailoong* only a few short months before. He had to read the letter again and again and look yet once more at the signature—"Jessie MacAllister," to be sure.

There was another thought. Her father must know and be satisfied. That gave him no little comfort.

But with this he suddenly remembered that he had promised Mr. MacAllister to be back shortly. He had no idea how long he had spent reading that letter. He sprang to his feet and hurried out to the verandah, where MacKay had joined the father and son. At his apology for being longer than he had expected there came again the little twinkle in the grey eyes and the quiet reply:

"No apologies are necessary. I, too, have not found the time long."

It did not entirely remove Sinclair's embarrassment. But the business man went on in a serious tone:

"Dr. Sinclair, I am informed by Dr. MacKay that your Church has refused to appoint you a medical missionary."

"Yes, Mr. MacAllister, they have rejected me. They do not consider that I am sufficiently devout or sufficiently orthodox to be trusted to heal the heathen."

"Yes! Yes! I understand. I have seen a lot of this in the church. There is a wrong standard. A devotion and spirituality which is too deep and real to be wordy is rejected, and that shallow, spurious kind which vents itself in talk is accepted. A man who says nothing but sacrifices himself is given second place, and he who does nothing but talk of self-sacrifice is put first. They are less concerned about orthodoxy of life than they are about orthodoxy of creed. But a better day is coming. These things will right themselves by and by. In the meantime you want work, do you not?"

"I certainly do."

"There is a scheme I wish to lay before you. God has just given me the greatest joy of my life. My son, my Allister, has been restored to me. I want to establish some permanent memorial of my gratitude, something which will be of use and do good to men. It was by a doctor that my son was saved from a cruel death. It was by a doctor and in a hospital that he was nursed back to health. It was by a doctor that he has been restored to me, and will be restored to his mother and sister. It seems to me that I could give no more fitting token of my thankfulness than to erect and equip a hospital and ask that doctor to

take charge of it. Dr. Sinclair, will you accept the position?"

"Mr. MacAllister, such a position has been the dream of my life. I will accept it gladly."

"I thought you would. Now as to the place. Since it was in North Formosa my son's life was saved, it would be appropriate that in North Formosa the hospital should be built. And there I intended to build it and present it to the mission of the Canadian Church. But, since your Church has refused your application on what are to me entirely insufficient grounds, the hospital will be erected in Hong-Kong and presented to one of the missions there. In all probability you will be able to do as great, or even a greater, work there than here. Would you be agreeable to that?"

"Quite. I had hoped to be able to work under the Church in which I was trained from childhood. But, since it has rejected me, it is a matter of indifference to me under what board I labour, so long as I am doing the duty set before me. But there is one request I wish to make."

"What is it?"

"I wish to take Sergeant Gorman with me as chief of the staff of male nurses and attendants, whether native or foreign. As you know, he is a Roman Catholic, and some narrow-minded people may make objections."

"There will be no objections. It will be stipulated in the deed of gift."

XL

THE COWARD

APRIL had passed. The first week of May had come, the hot May of the tropics. Yet there was a sweetness, a certain morning freshness about it. On her second trip after the blockade the *Hailoong* had borne back to Hong-Kong a little group of passengers. They were Mr. MacAllister, his son, and Dr. Sinclair.

Sergeant Gorman, who had returned to Amoy to his family by the previous voyage of the boat, joined them at that port and accompanied them to Hong-Kong. As he expressed it to McLeod, he wanted "jist to be in at the finish; jist to see the docther fix bayonets an' take the fort wid one gallant charge, an' see that spalpeen of a Carteret scattered an' runnin' for cover in total rout and confushun."

Towards midnight the *Hailoong* slipped into port. There were few about and no guests in the rotunda or corridors of the hotel to whom it was necessary for Mr. MacAllister to introduce the young men by whom he was accompanied.

In the reunion which followed Mrs. MacAllister forgot for the time her opposition to the friendship between her daughter and Sinclair. Her gratitude for his rescue of her son was deep and sincere. With all the warmth of her Highland nature she thanked

him, till he blushed painfully and showed an embarrassment under praise which he had never manifested in the most trying moments of the ridicule he had suffered when they were first acquainted.

The next day passed like a dream to Sinclair. Father and mother were constantly with their long-lost son. Sinclair and Miss MacAllister were left much to themselves. In some way during those seven months of separation they had grown acquainted with one another. That sacred and never-to-be-forgotten hour in which they had confessed their love had found them almost strangers. It had been as one kneels to a sovereign that he had knelt before her and gave her hand the kiss of homage. It was with the grave reverence of a sacred rite that he had sealed their vows of love by pressing his lips to hers.

But that was in the past now. Seven months had slowly worn away; seven months in which thoughts had been busy. And ever in the background of those thoughts was the fact that they loved each other, and had confessed their love, and neither had shrunk from the other nor repelled a caress. The passion, the abandon of love had grown during those months of waiting. It knew that it would not be refused.

"Oh, Donald, I have been so weary for you, so lonesome and weary! I have dreamed of you out there under the rains, among the wounded, and facing the bullets. . . . Donald, I'm ashamed. I know that it wasn't brave. But I couldn't help it. Often and often I cried myself to sleep."

Her face was tear-wet now as he lifted it to his. But it was smiling through its tears.

"Jessie, it was the thought of you which kept me up. It was because of you that I stayed at work.

If it hadn't been for you, I might have given up before the end came. . . . I might not have been there when Allister fell."

She shuddered at the thought and pressed closer to him. But Allister was safe, and the suggestion of what might have been now only served as a stimulus to her love for the man to whom she had given her heart before he had done that which was to bind her to him by gratitude as well as by love.

But her mother was not yet ready to give up her project of marrying her daughter to the Earl of Lewesthorpe. He was still the suitor she had accepted, if her daughter had not. She realized very clearly that her daughter had no more inclination towards him than when they came to Hong-Kong. Indeed, it was the other way. On more than one occasion her aversion to him had been so manifest as to cause comment. But Mrs. MacAllister had resolved to have her own way and gain her ambition. Not even gratitude to Dr. Sinclair for his inestimable service could bend her will.

If because she was grateful she had allowed him some liberty that day without her watchful presence, she had intended that evening to make it perfectly plain that Lord Lewesthorpe was the only one who would be countenanced as an aspirant for her hand. With her love for social events, and a touch of the melodramatic, she had invited a very few very select friends for the evening. Most of them did not know that she had a son. None save those who had accompanied him from Formosa knew that her son was in Hong-Kong.

Of course Captain Whiteley and Mr. McLeod were among the guests. Her husband, son, and daughter

had insisted that Sergeant Gorman should be one of the number. Remembering that he had once told her that he was the son of an Irish gentleman, she consented. Otherwise it was to be a surprise.

It was a surprise. The guests arrived one by one and were presented to Allister. The last to come was the lion of the evening. Mrs. MacAllister greeted him effusively and conducted him to where her son sat in a great easy-chair, hidden by a group of guests.

"Allister, my son, I want you to meet one of our most intimate friends, a particular friend of your sister, the friend of whom I spoke to you to-day, his lordship, the Earl of Lewesthorpe."

Allister had risen to his feet. The two young men were facing each other in silence. The young aristocrat's dark countenance turned a ghastly yellow and his jaw dropped. Allister's pale cheeks had a flush of burning red and his great dark eyes fairly blazed with anger.

"Carteret! The coward!" burst from his lips.

On the blanched faces of the guests wonder and consternation were written. But astonishment held them dumb. Before any of them could speak Carteret's ready self-assurance returned.

"Lieutenant MacAllister," he said, "why not let by-gones be by-gones? We have both made mistakes. We have both suffered. These things belong to the past. Why not let them die, and start afresh?"

"If it were only the past, Carteret, I would let them die. But it is the present. You were a coward in the past. You are a scoundrel now."

Sinclair stepped quickly to Allister's side, for he saw that he was becoming dangerously excited. Mrs.

MacAllister awoke out of her paralysis of surprise to cry:

"Allister! Allister, my son! What is the meaning of this? Has the fever come back on you? Why do you insult his lordship so? What is the meaning of this?"

"Mother," he said, "it is not fever. It is cool fact. That is the man who ragged me all through my service in the Guards. That is one of the men who insulted me after Tel-el-Kebir. He is the one who was too much of a coward either to take a thrashing or to fight, and Standish was shot. That is the man who has caused me to be an exile these nearly three years, to suffer starvation and wounds under a foreign flag. Yet I could forgive all that, as I have forgiven Standish. But knowing that, and without your knowing it, he has dared to speak love to my sister and ask her hand in marriage. I'll never forgive him that. Never!"

Drawing herself up to her full height, Mrs. MacAllister turned on her lion. Her raven black hair, her flashing eyes, her high colour and large, strong frame were the very embodiment of the fearless spirit of her race:

"Lord Lewesthorpe, iss thiss true?"

"It is very apparent that I am not welcome here," he replied. "With your permission, I'll retire."

"Bedad, an ye'd betther, ye cowardly spalpeen!"

Gorman had made one quick step forward, with the evident intention of helping him to retire, when Sinclair's iron grasp closed on his shoulder.

"You're right, docther; I was forgettin' meself."

That was the only departure Gorman made that evening from the strictest rules of the conduct to be

expected of the son of an Irish gentleman. And perhaps it wasn't a departure, either, but the most characteristic act of all. In any case, he saw "that spalpeen of a Carteret scattered an' runnin' for cover in total rout an' confushun."

XLI

"GOOD WILL TOWARD MEN"

IT was Christmas Day. Not Christmas Day of the North, with its clear frosty air, its robe of virgin snow, its furs, its prancing horses, and tinkling sleigh-bells. It was Christmas Day in the tropics, with a summer sky and summer sun, with roses blooming and rich tropical plants spreading their huge leaves and casting a grateful shade in the botanical gardens. A slight breeze from the northeast tempered the warmth.

It was a high day in Hong-Kong. In the early forenoon services had been held and the age-old song had been sung.

> "Glory to God in the highest,
> And on earth peace, good will toward men."

At high noon in the Union Church, where men of many creeds worshipped in harmony, Dr. Donald Sinclair and Miss Jessie MacAllister were married with simple, yet solemn, rites. The ceremony passed without unusual incident, save that Constance Beauchamp just missed kissing the groom before he had time to kiss the bride. And when they turned to pass out of the church Sergeant Gorman, in a stage whisper, said to McLeod:

"Be all the saints above, McLeod, if the angels in glory look anny purtier than thim two, glory's no place for you an' me."

In the afternoon the Allister Thanksgiving Hospital was formally opened by the governor of the colony, and in the name of Him who came to heal men's diseases it was dedicated to the work of healing the diseases of men.

When the notables had dispersed to talk of the merchant prince's munificent gift, when the guard of honour had marched back to the barracks, and the music of the bands had died away, a few who had special interest in the work, or had come from far to be present on that day, still strolled through the long, cool corridors, the well-furnished wards, and the high, centre-lighted operating-room. Consul Beauchamp and his family and Dr. MacKay had come from Formosa to be present. They stood with the donor, his wife, and son.

"This must be a great satisfaction to you, Mr. MacAllister," the consul said.

"Yes, Mr. Beauchamp. I never before knew as I know now that the pleasure of wealth is not in making or keeping money, but in giving it away. What do you think, Dr. MacKay?"

"I was not thinking of that. I was thinking of my little hospital with its poor equipment and its need of a doctor to take charge. I am not covetous. But I cannot help thinking that this hospital and the doctor who is at the head of it might have been in North Formosa, where it is needed even more than in Hong-Kong. But there was no vision, and my people must suffer."

And when that hospital became not only a centre of healing but developed a medical college in connection with it, when the doctor at the head of it grew to be such an authority on tropical diseases that he

was called to England to be dean of a great school of tropical medicine, when he received honours from medical colleges and societies the world over and a knighthood at the hands of his sovereign, those who knew him often thought of the day when he was refused appointment as a medical missionary in the little North Formosa Mission. And they wondered.

But Dr. Sinclair was not thinking of that then. He had been showing his bride the great building her father had erected, for she had arrived from Englaid only the evening before and had not found an opportunity to see it. Together they walked on the deep, cool upper verandah and looked out over the glorious prospect of city and harbour, mountain and sea. Side by side they stood under one of its arches, her hand resting lightly in his.

"It is all so fairy-like," he said, "that even yet I can scarcely persuade myself that it is not a dream."

"It is a dream, Donald, the loveliest dream one could wish. But what is best about it is that it is a dream of delight which does not vanish with one's waking."

"To me the strangest thought of all is the way it was brought about. I left home not knowing where I was going, with only a vague idea that I might find a place to do good somewhere. I have been given an appointment beyond my fondest imaginings. What is more than all beside, I have been given you."

Behind the lattice-work which sheltered one end of the verandah from the rays of the sun and from the gaze of the inquisitive, her head rested on his shoulder, her lips were lifted to his.

"Donald," she said softly, "my story is even stranger than yours. I came to the East with little

thought of anything but pleasure; with little purpose in life, and no ambition to do good. I have been given a brother and a husband, love and a life to live. I did not deserve it. What does it mean?"

"It means that there is a hand shaping our destinies, giving us a work to do, showing us a path to tread. Are we willing to follow the leading of that hand, Jessie?"

"Yes, Donald."

The measured step of drilled men sounded on the steep gravelled road below. Sergeant Gorman and a squad of the ambulance corps he had already trained were bearing an injured man to the door. Arm in arm Dr. Sinclair and his bride walked down to see the first patient borne in. In a few moments more his wedding coat was thrown off, his operator's apron and sleeves slipped on, and Sinclair was at work.

Thus without fuss or delay, refusing to be excused even by the festivities of the marriage-day, the Life-Healer and the fair woman who had been willing to blend her destiny with his together entered on their life-long labour of Good Will Toward Men.

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